

Poet Lore

VOLUME XX

MARCH — APRIL, 1909

NUMBER II

IN CHAINS*

(*Les Tenailles*)

(*A Play in Three Acts*)

BY PAUL HERVIEU

Member of the French Academy

AWARDED THE GRAND PRIZE BY THE FRENCH ACADEMY

Translated by Ysidor Askenasy

DEDICATION

MISS MINNIE KAHN, St. Louis, Mo.

As a token of friendship and admiration.

YSIDOR ASKENASY.

Je suis heureux d'attester que vous avez pris le soin confraternel de ma Soumettre votre traduction de ma pièce "Les Tenailles"; et vous avez mon autorisation pour en faire plein usage.

PAUL HERVIEU.

Paris, le 19 Juillet, 1908.

CHARACTERS

MICHEL DAVERNIER.

A SERVANT (man).

PAULINE VALANTON.

FERDINAND VALANTON.

RENE FERGAN.

IRENE FERGAN.

ROBERT FERGAN.

ACT I

The stage represents an elegant drawing-room. In the rear a conservatory. Doors at right and left. Lamps lit. Light, as for small reception.

SCENE I

IRENE, PAULINE

(*As the curtain rises PAULINE questions her sister with tenderness. IRENE, agitated, nervous, traverses the stage its entire length. The men are smoking, and can be seen behind the glazed door of the conservatory.*)

Pauline.— Finally, for what can you reproach your husband?

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Irene (with vehemence).— I wish I did not love him.

Pauline.— Whose fault is it? You accuse him of not loving you. Perhaps he could answer that *you* are not affectionate.

Irene.— Ah! I feel that I would know how to cherish some one, if that some one for whom I am longing with all my heart would only come! But he, after ten years of married life, of life in common, has not even made me resigned, and I am now in despair.

Pauline.— Ah! when I saw last month that that devilish law of divorce was voted, I immediately thought of the new stimulant you would find in it; you and all like you, my poor Irene, who until now were contented with making simply a very bad household —

Irene.— I was never satisfied.

Pauline.— Why don't you arrange your life differently? You have no child to console you; go into society to amuse yourself. Do not refuse the opportunities of being outdoors as much as possible. Here, in this house so excellently planned for receiving guests; with such comfort; with a jolly fellow as husband and a charming woman as hostess,— you should recommence to entertain. Reopen your circle, which you have narrowed, so that it scarcely counts any one but myself, your old sister, not exceedingly amusing, and your brother-in-law. By and by have an occasional evening with us.

Irene.— It is not pleasure that I need; it is happiness. I crave and weep for the lack of it; you advise me to take only drugs.

Pauline.— I repeat, Robert, no doubt, is not ideal; but it is yourself who makes your misfortune, with your dreams and your lively and excitable disposition. This will all pass, alas! and sooner than you know —

Irene.— Can you reproach me for being different from this man who feels enthusiasm for nothing, who revolts against nothing, who is nothing, nothing but my master, for me —

Pauline.— For you, who are ready to listen to everything, who feel all things passionately, who are ready to live and die for everything.

Irene.— I do not pretend to be of a superior nature. I have no vanity. I should not ask my husband to be a great man. It would have been enough, perhaps, that he were a man, an ordinary man, possessing the ordinary virtues, and even vices, but also emotions, the power to feel pain, to be interested in life. But my husband does not give me even the possibility of commiserating him, to spend for him a bit of my heart, which is so large!

Pauline.— Notwithstanding, you have very fine occasions to show a little pity! Just see: your disagreements in everything, your discords, your quarrels; see? There is much to anger, to enrage him.

Irene (with a restrained irony).—You don't know him. Such men as he are always calm, in their conviction of being right. When he rises in the morning he is ready to be right all day. He is right with the servants, with the horses, with everything. In all stories that he relates there is always one who was wrong, while he was right.

Pauline.—He is not right, then, against you?

Irene (wild, sullen).—Yes! As a husband he uses his power against me whenever it is convenient to him, but without the least regard whether it is convenient to me.

Pauline.—I take the liberty of giving you a sermon. It is I who caused you to be married and in a manner exactly as I was married by our mother. My husband is identical with yours. They both have the same manner of conduct, the same kind of idleness in their equal wealth. Their habits of clubs, sports, hunting are almost similar. Both are sons of rich families, having had fathers who worked hard; they and others like them form a legion of similar husbands, who have wisely married, before being too baldheaded, before being too ugly, young girls richly endowed like us, excellently educated and reared in convents like ours. Their households compose the good middle class of society. And as for my part, I am very well satisfied with my lot. Ferdinand and I love each other sincerely—just as we should.

Irene.—Oh! I know that. You are one of a certain limited number of wives always satisfied with their lives. But it is you who at the right moment will make also the most resigned widows. The one and the other are of the same kind.

Pauline (a little offended).—I don't quite see the connection.

Irene.—Is that so? Just a few months ago, at the dinner when Michel Davernier told us of his trip to Greece, do you recall what your husband said? He said very naturally: "Should I have the misfortune to lose my wife, and were I still young enough, I should take just such a trip? You seemed to find this also very natural."

Pauline.—Why, was it not?

Irene.—What? Is that a good husband, who in presence of his wife should thus foresee a possibility of becoming a widower, to start a trip with just a little baggage?

Pauline.—You always go to the extreme.

Irene.—And you? Is that, then, the manner of being in perfect accord in a household? It is not like that that I want to be loved; nor do I care to love like that. It is against such misery that I cry and struggle here.

Pauline (maliciously).—If I gave but little attention to what my

husband said, it is, no doubt, because I amused myself by watching you.

Irene.— Me?

Pauline.— Yes, you. While Michel Davernier kept us under the charm of his speech, his ideas seemed to me devilishly advanced in every respect but you gave the impression of finding them very eloquent.

Irene (with embarrassment).— What do you mean to say?

Pauline.— Would you like me to add even the reason to which I attribute the particular nervous irritation that you feel against your husband? It is because he lacked, I confess it, ability and refinement, which Michel showed during the discussion. Since we have again met the friend of our childhood, your husband has given you but very little opportunity to show how small he is.

Irene (agitated).— Then you think — what do you think?

Pauline.— I think that you were wounded in your self-love, and that there is nothing therein. All this will pass (*pointing to the back of the stage*). The smokers are coming back. Your eyes are red. You should perhaps —

Irene.— Yes, once more make myself presentable. (*She goes into her chamber through the right.*)

SCENE II

PAULINE, FERGAN

Fergan.— How is this, my dear Pauline? My wife leaves you alone?

Pauline.— You came just in time to take her place.

Fergan.— In fact, I came to take leave of you. Irene did not think it necessary to tell me that we would have guests. I had to pretend urgent business to avoid the company of your Mr. Davernier. I have come to believe that he is a fellow of great value, but he is poison to me. I left him with Ferdinand, who, it seems, can endure him more than I.

Pauline.— And you go away to make your indispensable visit to the club?

Fergan.— Oh! indispensable? No! But there is a little group of friends who play the game among themselves. When we take leave at seven o'clock, we say: 'Will you be here this evening?' 'I will be if you will be.' 'Well, then, I'll be.' Then we have a mark, an aim, our little word to keep.

Pauline.— Did you never ask yourself if there was no other thing of more importance to you? Yes; the peace of your home. What do you think your wife feels whenever you leave her alone at home?

Fergan.— My wife? She is enchanted! You could certainly see how sullen and disobliging she acted towards me all the time at dinner. Well, the moment she knows that I am away, I wager she will become very amiable, very joyous. The moment I come where she is, she becomes gloomy. When I depart, she feels at once an air of deliverance.

Pauline.— Instead of being contented with things as they are, you should try to change them. The situation is indeed grave.

Fergan.— What would you have me do? It is Irene who does not suffer me any more. That began, I do not know when; and continues, I do not know why; and I don't care even to give the impression of perceiving it.

Pauline.— If you become stubborn on your side, she will become stubborn on hers, and the breach between you will become more and more wide.

Fergan.— The worse! I have thought a great deal. My conscience does not reproach me for anything. Of what does Irene complain?

Pauline.— Of nothing precisely — of not being happy.

Fergan.— Does she believe I am? With her singular, capricious character, her continual hostilities, her glum and scowling look! She should bear that in mind: the more she comports herself so, the more I shall go for fresh air and shall wait until that passes.

Pauline.— But, then, what will become of her during that time?

Fergan.— She will think the matter over.

Pauline.— Oh! She is of such a nature that you might wait a long while for her submission.

Fergan (with authority).— She is my wife.

Pauline.— She is first herself, and then your wife.

Fergan.— I married her to give her a peaceful and agreeable home. I ask her to share with me an ordinary, possible life, like all the world.

Pauline.— Irene is a person who is not like all the world.

Fergan.— I pity her. Whoever is not like the rest of the people is of necessity wrong. As you see, it is not I who must change. For my part I take life as it presents itself. Irene is constantly dreaming. I never dream. And I do not understand how one can wish for anything better than a peaceful life. It is your sister who must change, and you should tell her so.

Pauline.— I told her the best I could, just a few minutes ago.

Fergan.— Did you? And what argument did she use against me?

Pauline.— The most adroit of all — it is beyond your comprehension.

SCENE III

PAULINE, FERGAN, IRENE

(IRENE scowls as she sees her husband; she stops for a while.)

Fergan (low to PAULINE).—There she is. (*Loud.*) Here you have company. I shall go away. (*IRENE cheers up.*) (*Low.*) Do you see? (*Loud.*) Good by. (*He bows slightly to IRENE, who lets him pass, and he goes out through the left.*)

SCENE IV

PAULINE, IRENE

Irene.—Did you speak of me?

Pauline.—Certainly! We had a heart to heart talk.

Irene.—Oh! Then you should understand each other very well!

Pauline.—Just as well as I understand you.

SCENE V

The same, VALANTON, MICHEL DAVERNIER. (*The last two arrive from the conservatory.*)

Valanton.—So, did I not convince you?

Michel.—Not in the least——

Valanton.—I was about to marry off Mr. Davernier.

Irene.—To whom?

Valanton.—To whom? How do I know? We did not reach that far. I said to him: ‘Now look, you are thirty years old. Your personal merits, your eminent situation in the university, entitle you to a wife with a large dowry, and it is for you to find her. It is only a short time since you returned to Paris; you did not make undesirable acquaintances nor any entangling alliances——’

Pauline.—Oh!

Valanton.—‘Consequently, you don’t love any one; then go ahead and marry! The first thing to do in such a case is to say to oneself, ‘I want to marry.’ Afterwards, there is nothing left but to look for a desirable match. Of course, as usual, one compares, chooses, and gives preference. This is worth more than the opposite method: to provide one’s self with a woman first, and decide to marry her later——’

Pauline (to *Michel*).—And what did you answer to these exhortations?

Michel.—To me marriage, birth, and death constitute the three great

solemnities of our existence. I attribute to each an equal importance. I look at them with the same spirit. Personally, we do not anticipate our birth; we die involuntarily when our time comes. So, also, I think that marriage should be accomplished without our intervention, just as well as our birth; without preparing for it more than we prepare for death. I should like marriage to come suddenly, fatally, instinctively, through the sovereign action of nature. The sacramental 'yes,' it seems to me, should come forth from our hearts, because it was put therein mysteriously, unknown to us, as if it were the first mewling, as it shall be the last sigh.

Irene.—Nature takes care to give us birth and make us die. It does not care to marry us.

Michel.—In fact, it watches how we fall in love in spite of ourselves, with one that excludes every one else. And this sentiment is as arbitrary, as undefinable, as divine, as is the law which first opens our eyes, and then closes them to the light.

Pauline.—Still, one has the liberty to get married or not; we are free to marry without love, and even against love.

Michel.—Exactly. Here nature inspired itself on the subject. It is not brutal, as in the question of life and death. It is more humble and very gallant. It insinuates, beseeches, delays, and torments.

Irene.—And after all it is powerless to make people refrain from marrying for family reasons, for reasons of convenience, or any other reasons, which are naught but reasons.

Michel.—We may disregard nature for a while, or we may not wait till it announces itself, but you may rest assured that sooner or later it will assert itself; it will either confirm through love the marriage of those who disregarded it at the beginning, or will make them unite with some one else outside — as in nature.

Valanton.—I know only one way of marrying: the city hall and the church.

Michel.—Marriage is love, to which the virtuous customs have nobly added the city hall and the church. In your system, it would be nothing else but the serious action of signing an important contract. I can see in this kind of engagement the most notable act of the bourgeoisie, but I deny it the character, the fatal beauty, of being one of the three great human acts.

Pauline.—Is it at the French schools in Athens that one learns things like that?

Michel.—No, in the school of life, where, my dear madam, you were present at my début.

Valanton.— It seems true that you were the first playmate of my little sister-in-law ?

Michel.— We were neighbors in our gardens at St. James. A day came when I had no father, no mother, no garden. But the illusion of still having a family, of a place in the world, I found in the good neighboring home.

A servant (coming in).— The carriage of Mr. Valanton is ready.

Valanton (to the SERVANT).— All right. Give us our coats. (*The SERVANT goes out.*)

Pauline.— You were very delicate when you were little, yes, very sickly.

Michel.— I inherited that from my parents.

Irene.— And he was a bad boy, too.

Michel.— Truly ?

Pauline.— Not at all. I have a vague recollection that he was very gentle.

Irene.— You did not know what more things to invent, that I should not always end by crying, and above all, you used to assume such a haughty air, and become angry, and then go away.

Michel (melancholy).— That is probably the way the boys cry. (*During this VALANTON has risen and made a sign to his wife, who also is ready to go away.*)

Valanton (to IRENE).— You will excuse us, dear friend, but I arose this morning at five o'clock to go hunting, and I ought to start again to-morrow morning. I am literally worn out, it simply kills me.

Irene.— If that were work, yes; but as it is amusement — (*goes towards MICHEL.*)— Good by, Mr. Davernier.

Michel (who also rose).— I go. I beg your pardon, perhaps I detained you by my staying a little too long. (*To PAULINE and to IRENE.*) But it was in some respects my farewells that I wanted to bid, and which I prolonged.

Irene (with emotion).— Farewell ?

Pauline (with a simple curiosity).— Are you going away again ?

Michel.— I am charged with a mission of researches in Asia Minor.

Irene.— And must you depart at once ?

Michel.— I should be ready in a very short time.

Pauline (whom her husband hastens to the door of the conservatory).— Will you not come to pay me a last visit ?

Michel.— Certainly. (*MICHEL stays to take leave of IRENE, while PAULINE and VALANTON go out.*)

SCENE VI

IRENE, MICHEL

Irene.— Why must you go? Can you not tell me anything about this project which is so unexpected?

Michel.— I should have preferred not to speak at all.

Irene.— And it seemed to you best to let us know through a letter that you had gone, and would remain away for a long time?

Michel.— Don't scold me, please.

Irene.— What made you take such a resolution?

Michel.— I once went away for reasons known by no one but myself. The time passed slowly. I tried to delude myself, and then I made the mistake of coming back. To-day I have first realized that mistake—I must depart.

Irene.— The reasons that you had and still have, is it impossible to let me know them?

Michel.— No. There is no one else to whom I could tell them.

Irene (confused).— Ah!

Michel.— Ask me.

Irene.— I do not dare.

Michel.— Well, then it is I who shall dare. Above all, the long months that I passed in the very heart of antique things have undoubtedly diverted my attention from my own life. Leave the present, and let me take you with me in my recollections along a sweet and sad walk through a temple in ruins.

Irene.— I understand very well that you are going to invent one of those games of which I spoke a few minutes ago, and which always made me shed tears.

Michel.— When your marriage was decided upon you were eighteen years old. I was twenty and had just left the normal school. You became the wife of Mr. Fergan. All this fell upon me heavily, like a judgment. I do not know how a woman feels at the age of eighteen, but I know that a boy of twenty is something which is not yet fully conscious. I continued to see you, to see you again and again, until one day I realized that I loved you distractedly. When one finds out that such is the circumstance, he is fully aware of his future. I was destined to love you forever, and it was forbidden me to ever love you. Then I looked for a refuge in work, and then in exile. I was going to live three years in the far East, trying to drown my thought, which you occupied, in the sun, in the vast pure sky of those shores. It is not because I felt healed that I returned, but it is because I felt no better. But here, here was something even worse to meet.

Irene (interrupting him).— I did not want to follow you in the past.

Michel.— Now, I have nothing else to tell you. (*A pause.*)

Irene.— Perhaps there is something missing in woman's soul. As for my part I shall never understand how one is able to leave the person he loves. To me it seems everything would be supportable but the absence. Of course I realize that the first sentiment was not to depart from the one we love so dearly.

Michel.— And if I were to tell you that it was a kind of folly which compelled me to run away from you would you not see in that impulsive action a most humble and passionate confession, the most painful proof of my sincerity and my submission?

Irene.— But if you came to realize that the sacrifice of remaining near me would be still greater—would you not consent? (*Silence from MICHEL.*) Even if I should ask it?

Michel.— I did not say that. I never thought this question would present itself.

Irene.— Nor did I, until now.

Michel.— And now?

Irene.— It seems to me I cease to be the woman who has ignored herself for such a long time. And at the news that came so suddenly that I was going to lose you again (*she begins to shed tears*), I felt that I had come to consider you something that belongs to me, I do not know how, but nevertheless very much to me.

Michel.— You feel ill. I am very culpable. I beg your pardon. I have not the right to understand what you say, to dare to believe it. It is only I alone who has to suffer. I learned it. You should not do it.

Irene (supplicating).— Promise that you will go away no more!

Michel.— What will become of us?

Irene.— Ah! whatever the future reserves for us please do not abandon me. Be my providence, my consolation. If you only knew how unhappy I am. No. Remain. Let us share our sorrows.

Michel.— You believe me stronger than I am.

Irene.— I believe you are strong, and I feel that I am strong.

Michel.— Yes, but in my love for you, you think that I am incapable of wishing anything which shall be in the least injurious to you. But did you ever stop to think that the most unspeakable anguish can soil even the purest sentiment?

Irene.— I do not understand you.

Michel.— I see here beside you a man whose rights and caprices can dispose of you.

Irene (palpitating with shame).— You are not generous.

Michel.— I am jealous. (*IRENE covers her face.*) And you will understand that there will not be room enough for me and the man to whom you belong. (*A long pause.*)

Irene.— You have made me feel how great a part of my heart you occupy — and I know also that I cannot belong to you. I ought not to belong to anybody. Help me. Remain to defend me; you will always see my eyes resting sincerely on yours. From this moment I shall forever keep myself for myself. (*She extends him her hand, which he very respectfully kisses.*) Return as soon as you can — thanks; this evening I feel my soul was born again.

Michel.— You have also renewed my life. (*Exit MICHEL through the conservatory.*)

SCENE VII

IRENE (alone, after watching MICHEL's departure, falls in an elbow chair, in a pensive attitude).

SCENE VIII

IRENE, FERGAN. (FERGAN returns through the door of his room, left. He is still in his evening dress, except the dressing gown that he has on. He comes in without being noticed by IRENE, until he puts his hands upon the back of the armchair where she sits.)

Fergan.— Are you asleep?

Irene (jumping).— I am frightened.

Fergan (amiably).— I did not mean that. I thought I would not find you in the drawing room at this hour. There is no more fire here. (*Feeling her hands.*) Your hands are frozen.

Irene (freeing herself).— Let me alone, please.

Fergan.— What is the matter?

Irene.— I thought I should be left alone.

Fergan.— Your nerves again?

Irene.— Yes.

Fergan (very gallant).— That suits you very well. You look still prettier.

Irene.— Pray, let me alone.

Fergan.— Are you really angry? But I am determined not to become angry. (*He embraces her.*)

Irene (running away to her room).— You are stepping on my dress.

Fergan (whispering in her ear).— I want to take you to your chamber.

Irene.— No!

Fergan.— Listen!

Irene (she passes the doorstep and closes the door rapidly).— Good by!

Fergan.— Irene! (*He tries to open, but the lock resists. He cries furiously, against the door.*)— You shall pay for this.

ACT II

The same setting as in Act I, but at daylight. The spring roller blinds of the glazed back door are lowered.

SCENE I

IRENE, FERGAN. (*As the curtain rises, FERGAN is ready to drink a cup of coffee at the table at the right. IRENE, seated in an armchair, at the other extremity of the room, reads, obstinately, a book. FERGAN, after manifestations of impatience, closes the book in the hands of his wife, and takes it away with a move of firm resolution.*)

Fergan.— Although you have tried to avoid it, I think I can delay no longer from telling you the changes I wish to make, and which I think are absolutely necessary. (*IRENE, her arms crossed, listens to him, without looking at him.*) It has been a long time, several months, since you mentioned the subject of your health. The state of your nerves, your migraines and your hysterics alarmed me only at first; to-day my opinion is settled as to these imaginary ills, which I deplore you still simulate. I have resolved to adopt extreme measures — to cure you. If life in Paris still continues to disagree with you I shall take advantage of the opportunity to terminate the lease of this residence, whose term of renewal is just approaching. Have you any objection to offer?

Irene.— None.

Fergan (with a cunning and spiteful tone).— Then, all that remains for me to do is to consult you as to your choice between two estates that I have in view. They have equal reasons for furnishing you a salutary climate. Both are in the country, far from any town, and receive excellent breezes from the neighboring forests. I would willingly abide by your preference, because you are destined to live at one of these two places more constantly than I, because I shall be compelled to be away frequently. The administration of our estates or some unforeseen events will make this necessary. Such absence will not exist for you whose life is so uniformly arranged. When do you think you will be disposed to examine the details of this question?

Irene (rising).—Never! I refuse to interfere in whatever you may bring before me regarding the future. We shall never form any plans together. I cannot conceive of the possibility of a common existence between us; you hate me as I hate you.

Fergan.—It is you who compel me to hate you. You impose upon me, your husband, a situation which is singular, ridiculous, outrageous! Change and I will change too.

Irene.—This does not depend on me. I feel something which is stronger than I am.

Fergan.—You were not always like that? Were you?

Irene.—Why not! At first, as any other girl who marries, I asked nothing else but to love the man whose wife I shall become. I tried, I struggled, I tormented my heart, but I could not triumph over myself. I cannot, I cannot! And I swear it from the depth of my heart, I shall never be able. It is from experience that I know I cannot love you at all.

Fergan (beside himself).—There is not one single word in what you say which is not a violation of your duty and a defiance of all my rights.

Irene.—I do not utter one word which does not express the sorrow and the truest outburst of my soul.

Fergan.—Do you realize where this will lead to?

Irene.—I don't care!

Fergan.—Then you are a fool! This at least can be cured.

Irene.—And I hope that you will be wise.

SCENE II

The same, PAULINE. The latter comes in just when the quarrel begins.

Pauline.—My God! My God! Again? Is it then really impossible for you to be of accord?

Fergan.—I give up. You may listen to her. It's useless to argue with her. Let her talk. I predict that in time you will visit a cell. (*Exit.*)

SCENE III

IRENE, PAULINE

Pauline.—Still quarreling?

Irene.—Appalling! From week to week, from hour to hour the evil becomes more evil.

Pauline.—Oh! Still more patience!

Irene.—The end has come! Yesterday you heard his vague menaces, To-day they are about to be executed. Yes, he wants to take me away from

here, isolate me from the rest of the world, sequestrate me, I do not know where, in prison, with him as my jailor!

Pauline.— Irene, my poor sister Irene!

Irene.— Under such circumstances I think nothing better than divorce or ——

Pauline.— Or what?

Irene (despairingly).— Out through the door; or, if — jump from the window!

Pauline.— You frighten me!

Irene.— Will you desert me? If you are with me there is no time to lose.

Pauline (embracing her).— You are wicked! But it is for your good that I try to convince you of your error. Your husband is not a villain. Let's see! Do you believe he has another to support as his wife? There is even gratitude you owe him.

Irene.— For what?

Pauline.— For not being brutal, as many others permit themselves to be; and which would be nothing less than you deserve.

Irene.— No, Pauline, you cannot with full conscience advise the immolation of this great sentiment,— one that a woman feels above all others.

Pauline.— And still it is your duty to remain an honest woman.

Irene.— No! I shall never admit that there is an honest duty under similar constraint.

Pauline.— Religion also commands obedience.

Irene.— No. Religion, though based on abnegation, cannot command such extreme humility to any of its creatures. And in fact, does not religion teach us that chastity is the state nearest to God? I cannot conceive a more miserable sin than to impose complaisance, affection for one's flesh. Yes, this is marriage. People have transformed this lie into a sacred institution. To feel and realize the only obstacle to one's happiness, to abominate it with all one's strength, and to be compelled to take it as a pleasure, when you will rather feel it as a deadly poison! Ah! the profanation, the shame!

Pauline.— Irene, you love somebody?

Irene.— Why?

Pauline.— Because people do not exalt themselves *against* something but *for* something ——

Irene.— Suppose I do. I would then have another reason to long for my deliverance.

Pauline.— But, my poor darling, a new husband — for another you will feel the same as you have felt for the first; you, with these caprices and indefinite ideas of yours.

Irene.— I am no longer the unsophisticated girl who followed your advice more than her own, when you made me marry Robert Fergan. You had your experience. And I obeyed your great and dear authority. It was not I who married ten years ago; it was another that hardly existed then, and of whom I hardly remember anything. But now I feel I am somebody, I have become myself. I know what I want, and what I cannot endure longer. This struggle tears me to pieces, my heart suffocates me, and I have a terrible desire to kill myself!

Pauline.— Ah! be quiet. For God's sake; what shall I do, what shall I do?

Irene.— You know what to do; it is understood, you promised me. It was you who postponed the hour — now it has arrived. You are just in time.

Pauline.— Then do you really want it?

Irene.— Go to my husband immediately. Tell him what you think best, be explicit and decisive. I would go, but I have no influence whatever upon him. He would simply treat me once more as a fool. To you he will listen. He always wanted me to have your seriousness, your commonsense. The gravity of your advice would make him reflect.

Pauline.— Yes, all this is right, but for divorce one should have at least a reason, present a pretext.

Irene.— It will be enough that my husband be of accord with me; as to the means that we shall adopt, invent, simulate, to obtain the grant which will give me the liberty, we'll see. Oh! tell him anything, until he concedes. Do not allow yourself to be repulsed from the very beginning. Insist, supplicate, frighten him. Go, you can do that — you are afraid; in fact, you have that of which to be afraid!

SCENE IV

The Same. A SERVANT

The servant.— Mr. Davernier asks if madam is disposed to receive him.

Irene.— Ask him to come in. (*Exit servant.*)

SCENE V

IRENE, PAULINE

Pauline.— What have you to say to Michel in such a moment as this? (*With an air of mistrust.*) Does he know?

Irene.— No. Michel does not even suspect what you are going to do. (*Very loyally.*) But — if he should know? (*With anguish*) Would you

abandon me? (*PAULINE is silent a moment, in emotion. Then embraces her sister with infinite tenderness.*)

Pauline.— My poor dear sister! (*She goes to FERGAN.*)

SCENE VI

IRENE, MICHEL

Michel.— I beg your pardon for coming here.

Irene (tenderly).— Yes. (*Gravely.*) But you should not have done it. You should not do it.

Michel.— I know. I promised that to you. I swore that to myself. But, supposing that you love me just as much as I love you.

Irene.— Let us suppose.

Michel.— Then the resolution of not seeing you is more difficult for me to keep than for you.

Irene.— In what way?

Michel.— Because I know if I should not come I should not see you at all, while you, you could always think that I am coming.

Irene.— And then?

Michel.— Then your time flies, hoping I might come, whereas with me I feel from minute to minute the certitude repeating itself of not seeing you — should I obey your warning.

Irene.— During those days, so long and so numerous, in which we live apart, so far from one another, have you not thought that our fate can change?

Michel.— I dare not wish for anything. Do you think of it, do you?

Irene.— During your absence I always see your pale forehead, all these dolorous characteristics of a malady that I would like to cure, and which engenders in me a pity still greater than the pity I feel for both of us. I dream of you as being delivered of this air of suffering, as being happy, very happy. When I am not with you, do you not see me — such as I am, and then, such as I could be?

Michel.— Yes. There are hours when you appear before me all distracted, full of love, and all unknown as yet by me, and still it is certainly you; yes, you, belonging to me forever, as through a miracle, without even a shadow of remorse or reproach, or even of mourning caused by the death of another!

Irene.— How similar your soul is to mine! and how our love seems to me greater with all the intensity of our pride! Neither you nor I have conceived of the possibility of a happiness in disloyalty. So, for a long time,

without having spoken to you, I have thought of nothing else except to be with you forever.

Michel.— What do you mean?

Irene.— Just at this moment our fate is being decided. Pauline is meeting my husband to ask him whether he is disposed that we give each other legally our rights as well as our liberty.

Michel.— And do you hope?

Irene.— I hope he will concede. I could not expect a senseless tenacity from his part against the only imaginable solution. Why, does he not need to-day his liberty just as well as I do? Nobody likes to remain in hell!

Michel.— I want to believe that, I believe it.

Irene.— But, to respond to the great event that now approaches, a great resolution is imposed upon you and me. The project of your going away, which I opposed at first, becomes now a necessity.

Michel.— To leave you?

Irene.— Yes. If there shall be any prospect for me to become your wife — it will probably be after one year. Then you might return — but if I am not able to break my chains (*with a sob*) we shall see each other no more —

Michel.— Irene!

Irene.— We shall always be apart, each of us in the dignity of our mourning, in the mourning of promised marriages, which never culminate! From the bottom of your soul are we in accord?

Michel.— But now I cannot go away from you any more. I have no more that rough energy that sustained me long ago. I could not live without you, without seeing you, or feeling that you are near me. When we are not together, I need the warm recollection of having touched — so — your hands, and the hope that I shall soon bend over your eyes, drink in the sweetness of your words — (*he wants to embrace her, to press her close to his bosom, and she shows great emotion*).

Irene.— Michel, please do not unnerve me, do not take away from me the confidence I have in myself, do not diminish the faith I sincerely have in my honesty. If our happiness is to last from to-day, let me remain all-deserving, let there be no memory to reproach me. Let me! (*She withdraws herself quickly.*) I am your betrothed.

Michel.— I adore you. Your will shall be obeyed.

Irene (showing much uneasiness).— You have stayed quite long. You must retire.

Michel.— Without knowing? What will become of me? How could I have the patience to know how the matter ended?

Irene.— I shall let you know immediately.

Michel.— But if you could not? What if something or some one would interfere or oppose your writing or going out?

Irene (*pointing to the conservatory*).— Then wait there. But take care not to be seen. That is all. Go, go; time passes. I am full of anguish. I hear steps approaching. (*MICHEL disappears into the conservatory.*)

SCENE VII

IRENE, then PAULINE. (*With attentive ear IRENE goes to the other door through which PAULINE enters swiftly.*)

Pauline.— Where is Michel? Did he go away? (*Almost out of breath.*) Don't get angry, don't wonder. I just had a terrible fright, that your husband might meet him — and catch an impression — in his wrath!

Irene.— Does he refuse?

Pauline.— He wants to tell you about that. Here he comes now.

SCENE VIII

The Same. FERGAN

Fergan.— So this is, then, the beautiful plot that you have prepared for me with your sister!

Pauline.— We did not plot!

Fergan (*to IRENE*).— This is the pitiful proposition that you calculated in which your headaches and nervous spells would culminate?

Irene.— You know very well that I never played at diplomacy with you. Since I have suffered in being your wife I never dissimulated that. I told you that very loyally, very plainly. To-day I tell you again that I am not able to suffer more. And as this depends on you I sent some one to ask you to be kind enough not to cause me further suffering.

Fergan.— Dear me! You ask of me, of me, who represents the defense of the right and the respect of morals, to accede to you, who represent the revolt against society!

Pauline (*interfering*).— Listen, Robert, do not assume the authority of principles. It is not a question here of being right or wrong.

Fergan.— Is that so?

Pauline.— As for myself, I tried my hardest to prevent this crisis.

Fergan.— My compliments!

Pauline.— But in the name of my tenderness for my sister, and of my very affectionate esteem for you, I adjure you, be generous. Be good, be even weak, if this is necessary at this moment; be nobly human.

Fergan.— My dear Pauline, your sister had thought necessary to ask you to act as mediator. As for myself, I need none. And I wish to settle our debate once for all by ourselves, between her and myself.

Irene (to PAULINE).— Do not leave me!

Fergan.— Do not be afraid. I shall not strike you. Or, at any rate— what depends. (*To PAULINE.*) But I repeat, my dear friend, that if you do not obey me at once you will oblige me to convince your sister that I am master here.

Pauline.— You are very cruel.

Irene (preventing her from passing through the conservatory).— Wait for me in my chamber.

Pauline (embracing her).— Pardon! I grieve I am unable to do anything for you. (*Exit PAULINE.*)

SCENE IX

IRENE, FERGAN

Irene.— You want then to push me to the limit, reduce me to I don't know what extremity?

Fergan.— I want simply to bring you to reason.

Irene.— But what argument do you oppose to my request for a separation? It cannot be that you still love me, after all!

Fergan.— No, I do not love you any more. I even reproach you for having spoiled my life — and if it were to make it over again —

Irene.— Then you feel a desire for revenge, to inflict upon me an expiation without end?

Fergan.— That would be my right. But I have something else to answer, and that is: On the day of our marriage I concluded with you with all my heart a very clear contract that made of me a married man. This contract doubled my situation morally and materially. Of this contract I observed all the clauses; I conformed to its spirit without any hesitation. To-day you come deliberately to ask me to lessen, to become a divorced man, a man who sells half of his furniture, who empties half his portfolio, and who remains with a half façade in society. And all these because it pleases you to have no more liking for my company? Well, now confess that my motives are a little more serious than yours. At least such would be the advice of all the family counsels, and all the tribunals on earth.

Irene.— And I cry out in horror against this dissembling life of marriage, where we are naught to one another, where hatred alone exists. Have we the love which makes one happy through the happiness we give? You

talk to me of human respect, of deeds of notary public, and things of that kind.

Fergan.— But it is you who insisted that your existence in my home should be that of a stranger to me; I treat you therefore as the adverse party against whom I have titles and signatures, without any other sentiments than that of my rights.

Irene.— Oh, yes, I admit all the laws which govern fortunes, determining the fate of wealth, assure to one his money, and even somebody else's; — for mine, I do not even think of it — but I do not admit that the law should make a person forever the property of another.

Fergan.— All you say is nothing but the negation of marriage itself, whose first principle is that one cannot leave of his own will!

Irene.— Now let us talk seriously. There is an instance, very recent too, in which here in France the decision of only one of the spouses would be sufficient to break marriage.

Fergan.— Who told you that?

Irene.— The attorney.

Fergan.— Ah! ah! Have you gone that far already?

Irene.— In the first years of this century, — a time which perhaps was better than ours, that was the law of married life. As you see, I do not dream of monstrous things, incompatible with the social order. To hate despairingly one's spouse, to hate him to-day more than yesterday, and to-morrow more than to-day, this was a cause won for divorce. And I think that should be the supreme reason. I do not see another as worthy as that.

Fergan (contemptuously).— The new law has not even admitted the divorce by mutual consent!

Irene.— Eh! When a husband and a wife are capable of understanding a divorce, they would have no more necessity of it! It is for those who are incapable of any accord, even in that, that the divorce has been invented.

Fergan.— Do whatever you please; all the ways are closed before you.

Irene.— I shall find one.

Fergan.— None! I do not impose services, nor serious injuries upon you. I am faithful, and as far as I know, no word of condemnation was ever uttered against me. Without these three grounds, and against a husband such as I am, you cannot ask anything of the tribunals.

Irene.— I can do and shall do so much that it will be you who will ask to be released from me!

Fergan.— Nothing!

Irene.— Nevertheless, suppose I create for you a situation which shall be intolerable?

Fergan.— You shall not triumph over my character.

Irene.— We will see.

Fergan.— Whatever grief you would bring upon me I would not answer except by keeping you more and more under my domination.

Irene.— I shall leave home, I shall run away.

Fergan.— And I will bring you back with gendarmes. (*IRENE suddenly springs up.*) I have the right to do it.

Irene (outraged).— And if the revolt should make of me a woman such as no man of honor could keep in his house?

Fergan (unyielding).— I shall keep you! It pleases me to not give you your liberty. Even my pleasure gives me a legitimate right to oppose yours. I shall keep you and shall not let you go!

Irene.— Oh! and they say there are no more slaves in the world! and still I must be a slave because I have a husband! There is no eternal oath before God any longer, because a sister nowadays may leave the convent; and yet there is one eternal oath, of a wife to her husband! No, this is above me; I do not accept it, I will not endure it!

Fergan.— Little by little you will become accustomed to it. Mark well! I am more than ever resolute about the reform of our habits, of which I advise you. We shall leave Paris. I am going to procure for you a calmer atmosphere, which will undoubtedly do you the necessary good; and then I will also profit by a little rest.

Irene (lost).— Is this your last word?

Fergan.— Yes.

Irene (imploringly with joined hands).— You will not be pitiless. You will not desire my ruin.

Fergan (repulsing her).— Ah, I pray, do not be foolish! When you would not yield to me I spared you from my supplications. My decision is now firmly made.

Irene (kneeling).— Mercy! Mercy! Save me!

Fergan.— My will is resolute. Arrange your toilet. Later on, some day, I am convinced you yourself will praise me for having kept you in the regular way. (*FERGAN goes out through the door which leads to his chamber.*)

SCENE X

IRENE (alone) then MICHEL. (*IRENE remains for a moment in an attitude of despair. Then, as if blinded, she goes towards the conservatory, wherefrom MICHEL springs upon her and receives her in his arms.*)

Irene.— Ah! You! You! Do whatever you please with me.

IN CHAINS

ACT III

The action takes place in the drawing room of a castle out in the country. In the back a porch which opens into a park. Doors at right and left.

SCENE I

FERGAN, VALANTON

(As the curtain rises, FERGAN is busy arranging some volumes on his book shelves. He has the aspect of a mature man. VALANTON, who has also grown old, enters through the right, carrying with him a fishing outfit.)

Valanton.—Are you not going with me? Are you busy?

Fergan.—You see, my dear fellow, it is I who continues to be the hostess of this home. Ever since we came here, almost ten years ago, I have never been able to persuade Irene to give the least attention to the little arrangements of the interior.

Valanton.—To be sure! But you must admit that it was not for her pleasure she came to reside in this country place.

Fergan.—Yes, but after ten years!

Valanton (taking a seat in order to arrange a fishing line).—Oh, the women; they can continue to be that way for a long time. People have even written special plays on this very theme. They had their boudoir a century before men came to have the smoking-room.

Fergan.—But you should not believe that Irene shows at present any ill will. I attribute her neglect of the house to a little fault in her character. But, thank God, I do not complain of her. We have come to an end once for all, of that horrible time, when I certainly was compelled to make her feel an iron hand.

Valanton.—In an iron glove.

Fergan.—Undoubtedly. But this way I accomplished the mission I had to.

Valanton.—Certainly, first the mission towards yourself.

Fergan (with satisfaction).—Especially towards her. I assured her the existence of an honest, honorable woman. With all her exuberances of ideas there is no telling of what she was capable, had I allowed her the direction of her actions. I tell you, I congratulate myself every day for having insisted sternly on that subject. In this retreat the physical condition of my wife has rapidly improved. She has become a mother. Her sentiments have modified. At last she understands life as one should understand it, as something which in fact is not so very bad, and in which we needed nothing more but to live a good life near one another.

Valanton.— Oh, evidently. In marriage there is no strife except during the first fifteen or twenty years. After that everything is serene.

Fergan.— Notwithstanding, this does not exclude the possibility of questions arising now and then which do not pass so easily. As, for example, just now I am going to settle a difficulty for which I foresee I shall need to summon all my courage.

Valanton (with an air of consternation).— Are you going to renew the strife with your wife?

Fergan.— Yes. A rather serious one, I am afraid. The trouble is in regard to the instruction of our René, and my wife seems not to be disposed to teach him as he should be taught.

Valanton.— Oh! my dear friend, will you not wait until Pauline and I have finished our sojourn at your home?

Fergan.— Impossible. The opening of the schools takes place to-day. I have sent word to the college of St. Cristophe, fifteen miles from here, that René will sleep there to-night. On various occasions Irene was so hostile to the idea of parting with the lad that I preferred to put off the discussion until the last moment.

Valanton.— What? Have you not even obtained her consent?

Fergan.— She always refused it in the same nervous manner that we know she had a long time ago. Then it seemed preferable to me to keep silent on this subject in order to save her *a priori* excitement and superfluous trepidation. In fact is not this right? The crisis of the separation was inevitable. Now, as you see, it is better to reason with Irene but once, at just the moment of the execution of what I think I must do.

Valanton.— Hm! Hm! This, truly, could not pass so easily by itself. (*Ready to go away with his outfit.*) At least try to have the reconciliation made before I return. I go to install myself with my fishing lines in a little corner that I discovered.

Fergan.— What kind of fish do you catch?

Valanton (modestly).— Oh, I do not exclude any.

Fergan.— But do you catch any?

Valanton.— None.

Fergan.— That is because you don't know your business.

Valanton.— It is the fishes that ignore theirs! They pass, they look, they scent, but do not bite. They do not know even how to play with the cork. They are sad — like all this country of stones and ravines. Well, good by. (*Exit through the left.*)

IN CHAINS

SCENE II

FERGAN, then IRENE and PAULINE

(*The two women enter through the door of the porch. IRENE has gray hair, her appearance austere and her habiliments somber. PAULINE carries an armful of dainty grasses and water flowers.*)

Pauline.— Ah, how tired we are!

Fergan.— Did you go very far?

Pauline.— We began with the woods, then arrived down at the field. We wanted to go out from the park and return through the hamlet.

Fergan (*with the certainty of a landowner aware of everything*).— Yes, but the hedge was an obstacle on your way.

Pauline.— Not at all. The path was cleared of its bushes. A peasant woman was just going in to wash some clothes in the river. The wife of a neighbor — is not that so, Irene?

Fergan.— This is a little too much. (*To IRENE.*) And what did you say to her?

Irene.— I asked her how her child was getting along.

Fergan.— And that is all?

Irene.— No. I gave her what she needed for the medicine.

Fergan (*taking his hat*).— Well, I — I shall go and ask her to be kind enough to leave there.

Pauline.— Oh! I should never have expected that of you! At least do not abuse her. She is a very poor woman.

Fergan.— Well, has she any right to my property?

Pauline.— Do you never get tired of always insisting on your rights?

Fergan.— Were all the people as I am, society would do better. I can guarantee that. (*Exit.*)

SCENE III

IRENE and PAULINE

Pauline.— You should have detained your husband.

Irene.— He does what he wants, and I do all in my power to oppose his will.

Pauline.— So neither the past years nor the situations that changed with age modified your attitude toward him?

Irene.— No!

Pauline.— But you do not quarrel any more, do you?

Irene.— At present between us there is only one quarrel that is possible; and this we have in our hearts as yet unexpressed.

Pauline.— And what is that quarrel?

Irene.— The education of René.

Pauline.— I think he finds your maternal tenderness a little exaggerated.

Irene.— Oh, yes, I adore my son. It is to make him live that I renounced death. And, if I am still alive, it is for this child, through this child, from whom nobody would be able to separate me. Ah! this little unquiet life, his little sad soul, which it seems to me is made but of my sighs; never shall I consent to trust him out of this home to teachers, strangers, others!

Pauline.— Has your husband spoken to you in regard to this?

Irene.— Yes, several times his explanations and insistences on this question have carried me to the lowest depths of despair. Until the last few days I trembled secretly, fearing that he may try to put his intention into action. But this year, as you see, he neglected to pay any attention to the date when colleges begin, and he did not renew his efforts. He who is so resolute in everything! One would say that in this respect he sees in me a creature guarding his little one. And in this he sees correctly; I would dispute it with him desperately, even to the death!

Pauline.— Poor sister! I realize that you live only for your child. But were you not destined to live your own life? Sometimes I think of what might have been if you had married the other; and I realize that you certainly were not marked for happiness.

Irene (thoughtfully).— Who knows?

Pauline.— Oh! no! certainly not! Your life would have been somber, rigorous, and extremely painful.

Irene.— Why?

Pauline.— I am thinking of what sorrow you would have been condemned to endure afterwards if you had realized your dreams of long ago; you have never told me about them, but I have guessed them.

Irene.— I do not understand you.

Pauline.— My God, I should not recall this to you. But I have thought of it often, very often.

Irene.— Will you please explain?

Pauline.— Why should you not confess it now? Is it not true that you intended to marry Michel Davernier?

Irene (turning aside).— Perhaps.

Pauline.— There! Ah! how many times have I thought that the worst of your sufferings would have been to lose the happiness after you had gained it!

Irene.— Then the only thing they should have done was to have granted me my share of happiness. As to the rest, I was willing to endure all.

Pauline.— No, this is not so. Then you would have truly known the depths of human sorrow and suffering; when, ascended to the greatest height of bliss with your beloved, you would have fallen suddenly,— he dead, in your arms!

Irene.— Had I married Michel he would not be dead now! I could have preserved him from death. I could have been there at any moment to care for him with love, and cure him with caresses. I could have saved him from what in his life without a home destroyed him little by little — solitude, anxiety, imprudence, all that one does not know — (*as she would talk to herself*) — all that one cannot know!

Pauline.— Pfff! A consumptive, son of a consumptive —

Irene (agitated).— Keep still!

Pauline.— What is it?

Irene (restraining herself).— Nothing. The dreadful thought of death (*Evasively.*) The recollection. Why did you talk to me of that?

SCENE IV

The same, RÉNÉ, FERGAN

Réné (enters running).— Mamma, mamma!

Irene (opens her arms).— Réné! My treasure! my little one so weak! Come, let me embrace you (*she entwines him*) that I may see you looking better! Oh! become strong (*the boy babbles*) and noisy (*he wants to free himself*), even bad, like a good little rascal.

Réné.— Papa promised me that he was going to take me in his dog cart.

Irene.— No, sir, no! Don't you know that you are not allowed to go out without me?

Réné.— Oh!

Irene.— First of all, just see, you are wet. What foolishness have you been doing? When I left you, you were going to write your lessons with mademoiselle.

SCENE V

The same, FERGAN

Fergan.— This proves that mademoiselle ceased for some time to have any influence upon the lad.

Irene.— You must change your clothes from head to foot.

Fergan (raising his shoulders).— Ta, ta, ta, ta!

Pauline (taking RÉNÉ by the hand, to IRENE).— Leave him with me. I am going upstairs. I shall give him a scolding, like all the aunties know how to scold. (*With a feint of gravity.*) That will not make him laugh (*tenderly*) nor cry. (*Exit PAULINE and RÉNÉ.*)

SCENE VI

IRENE, FERGAN

Fergan (a bit embarrassed).— I want to discuss with you the education of Réné.

Irene (frightened).— Why to-day?

Fergan.— Because the matter cannot be delayed any longer.

Irene.— Why?

Fergan.— He is almost ten years of age.

Irene.— Well?

Fergan.— Well, up to this time I gladly recognized that it was best to let you have authority over him. There are thousands of primary cares which only the mother understands perfectly. I think you will find me right in that. Although disapproving of your excess of attention, I never crossed you.

Irene.— And now?

Fergan.— Now, as our son grows to be a little man, it is not pleasing to me that you should make a young lady of him.

Irene.— Then why not tell me how to rear him?

Fergan.— I am no more competent than you are in the details of education. I only know that Réné is in need to-day of a broader instruction. We should not limit him only to that which is given in the family.

Irene.— If you think I alone am not sufficient, let us take a teacher, or if necessary several teachers.

Fergan.— No, that is not the point. We should thus render a very bad service to the boy. When of age he will find himself unaccustomed to discipline, to emulation. He would have no self-confidence; and these things can never be acquired except in a college.

Irene.— Then we stand again at the vital question. How many times must I tell you that this will be a murder, a real murder, to take Réné from my care?

Fergan.— Let us forego inordinate imagining. Let us be serious. Our son will never work well enough at our side. You love him too much, in a very passionate manner. You will never know how to be severe enough.

Irene (indignantly).— And you would like to hire people to be severe to him? A poor little child that I his mother did not dare to believe she would be able to rear? But don't you see that he is always in need of some

one to take care of him? At the slightest indisposition he coughs. At times I rise during the night and find him in perspirations which frighten me.

Fergan.— Well, this is just exactly what angers me, and what I find quite ridiculous. It is your luxury of precautions that does not give him enough sunshine and good fresh air. The little gentleman, I think, will be better off when he is less spoiled.

Irene.— My son will never leave me.

Fergan.— He will follow my example. At his age I had already been two years in a boarding school. He will do as the children of all our neighbors, as the children of all the people do. He will come here Sunday; I shall go to see him. You might go and see him whenever you want — and when the condition of our horses will permit it.

Irene.— René is sick, I tell you, very sick, his life is in doubt. Oh! I know it! The doctors have told me.

Fergan.— What doctors?

Irene.— All. All that I could consult in the neighborhood.

Fergan.— Did you do that? Without my knowledge?

Irene.— Yes.

Fergan.— This is absurd. And what kind of sickness did they find our son has?

Irene.— They recognize that —

Fergan.— What?

Irene.— That only my love would be able to preserve him, to save him, through a daily régime and by an every moment treatment.

Fergan.— Enough empty phrases! When somebody is sick his malady has a name. Please be precise.

Irene.— How you torment me! Don't you see how overwrought I am?

Fergan.— Oh! the doctors could easily realize what you want them to do. You brought accommodating diagnostics. And then, his is that? You are a healthy woman; I, by Jove! I have a sound body. Is it with such antecedents that sickly children are born? (*IRENE bends her head during these words, which embarrass her.*) And then we shall see how our son has profited from his first year away from home.

Irene.— Never.

Fergan.— What?

Irene.— You will never convince me on this point. I shall never give him up!

Fergan.— Well, then let us finish immediately this useless discussion. Will you please prepare the necessary baggage for René?

Irene.— For what?

Fergan.— I take him with me to the college —

Irene.— Will you? Do you dare?

Fergan.— In the course of one hour I want to leave.

Irene.— Oh! this will never happen. It is the life of my son that I defend against your horrible error. I shall keep him if it were necessary day and night in my arms.

Fergan.— I see you are exactly as I knew you long ago. You compel me now to exert all the power as a father that I exerted once as a husband!

Irene.— Don't speak of what you have done. It was too great a triumph for you, that you should try again. I bend my head with still more hatred in my heart. I hid my face, and since then I have never looked you straight in the face. But to-day it is not your wife who stands before you, and whom you oblige to defy you; it is the mother, a mother whom nothing will move.

Fergan.— You don't know the rights of the mother.

Irene (with a fierce contempt).— It is not the mothers who abuse their rights! We women feel them. They assume form with us just as the child forms within us, and our eyes see those rights growing, bound to our own bowels.

Fergan.— Once more I say I am right by law, in spite of your utopian ideas.

Irene.— Oh! this dreadful word comes forth again. You also, I think, are playing with my son's life, just as you did when you destroyed mine, without any remorse, with these eyes of yours as imperturbable as an executioner in accomplishing his duty!

Fergan.— You may say whatever you please, nothing will deter me from disposing of our son.

Irene (in a tragic hesitation).— Do you think I do not know what to offer as an argument?

Fergan.— Our son belongs to me more than to you, according to the law.

Irene (out of breath).— That is not right!

Fergan.— In spite of you, it is.

Irene.— No, no!

Fergan.— Go see to his departure.

Irene.— Listen!

Fergan (going away).— No, I will order the horses hitched.

Irene (barring his way).— Before God, this child is only mine!

Fergan (pushing her back).— He is mine, I am his father!

Irene (violently, with a great decisive move).— You are not his father!

Fergan (stupefied).— What? are you becoming a fool?

Irene (almost restored to serenity).— No, I become frank, open.

Fergan (suffocated).— You say that? Do you know what you say?

Irene.— I know.

Fergan.— You want to mislead me. This phrase. Unbelievable. This outrage. This is your last recourse. Talk rapidly, but talk.

Irene.— You ask for proofs? Well, I'll give them to you. Do you remember I closed the door of my chamber against you? I tried all in every possible manner to go out of your way. You took me in servitude.

Fergan (with a fierce voice).— And then?

Irene.— Through what sentiment do you think I could again become your wife?

Fergan (beginning to understand).— Oh!

Irene.— I had my secret. To keep my child safe I kept the truth hidden, just as to have him now I speak!

Fergan (rushing upon her).— Scoundrel, low scoundrel!

Irene (at the door bell).— I shall call your servants.

Fergan (mastering himself).— The scandal! In fact, I know now that no infamy could have kept you.

Irene.— It is your pitiless logic which compelled me to lie — to do evil. And it is I who do not pardon now!

Fergan.— That man? Did I ever meet him?

Irene.— Perhaps.

Fergan.— What is his name?

Irene.— I shall never say.

Fergan.— Did he come here?

Irene.— No, near here.

Fergan.— I cannot realize how you came to see him.

Irene.— Nor do I.

Fergan.— Did you see him often?

Irene.— !!!

Fergan.— Do you still see him?

Irene (hiding from him the sorrow of her answer).— No; it is a long time since he went away, very far, forever —

Fergan.— And don't you think it is abominable that the son of your lover should be my son, and must remain always my son?

Irene.— Who says so? It is your own law, which said that in spite of me, in spite of all, I shall remain your wife!

Fergan.— I never could have suspected you. I knew you as my enemy, but — (*tears rise in his eyes, because of his vanquished pride*) — but I honored you as such.

Irene.— Everybody makes war according to his means. You employed all your might; I had naught to use against you (*with a soft voice*) but my weakness!

Fergan.— I did nothing but stand firmly for my rights.

Irene.— Nature has its rights also.

Fergan (maliciously).— At least haste made you very imprudent. By exempting me from my duties of father you cannot take away my authority. You have betrayed this child with whom I can do whatever I please.

Irene.— Now, after I have told you everything, you can do nothing.

Fergan.— Is that so?

Irene (with authority).— Nothing which would not be a cowardice, an impossible vengeance.

Fergan.— The worse!

Irene.— No. I dared make this revelation because I wanted to get my son back forever, and free him from your very polite and obliging sentiments of a man pure and simply civilized.

Fergan (menacing).— And if I become a savage now?

SCENE VII

The same. RÉNÉ

Irene.— René! My God!

Réné (going toward FERGAN, between him and IRENE).— Don't we go out soon, papa?

Fergan (agitated).— Hush!

Irene (embracing him).— Yes, hush!

Fergan.— Send him away, that we may say all we have yet to say.

Irene (to RÉNÉ).— Go and wait for me with Aunt Pauline.

Réné.— Why did papa cry? He who never cries.

Irene (willing to make him go, with a soft voice).— Go on!

Réné.— How it is that you don't cry, too, you who always cry — when you think that nobody is seeing you? Oh, I have seen you often, I —

Irene (embracing him).— Ah! my dear, no more tears. (*Accompanying him.*) Go, go. (*Exit RÉNÉ.*)

SCENE VIII

IRENE, FERGAN

Fergan.— The child is now your own — yes! I leave him to you. You may do with him whatever you choose. You were right when you said

that I cannot do him any injustice. (*Weakening.*) It is enough that I realize I do not love him. (*With authority.*) You will take him with you. You shall go away with him.

Irene.— I shall not go away.

Fergan.— What?

Irene.— I shall never consent to be cast out. For my son I shall sacrifice nothing of his regular situation and of the consideration which is attached to his legal — birth!

Fergan.— I shall compel you then.

Irene.— No.

Fergan.— It was you who pleaded so ardently for divorce. It is I who ask it now.

Irene.— I shall not accept it now. My youth has gone, my hopes lost, my future as a woman is dead. I refuse to change the course of my life, to budge, to move out. I have but the will to remain till the last where I am and what I am.

Fergan.— And you expect me to support you?

Irene.— You should. You have nothing against me except my confession.

Fergan.— Would you deny it in need?

Irene.— Would you dare to make it public? (*A pause.*)

Fergan (annihilated).— Then what do you want me to become, so, face to face with you always, always? Do you expect me to endure such a life?

Irene.— You have to endure the same life that you have imposed upon me until to-day. We have come to the same shore. Now make yourself comfortable, so that you can feel the weight and carry it also. It is quite a long while since I have carried it alone.

Fergan.— There is no justice!

Irene.— There is only one, of a common unhappiness.

Fergan.— You are guilty and I am innocent.

Irene.— We are both unhappy. And at the bottom of misfortune there are only equals.

SOME RECENT POETRY AND THE EMOTIONALIZING OF EVOLUTION

BY F. B. R. HELLEMS

AS my eyes turn backward through the arches of science and poetry spanning a quarter of a century, they are led to a detaining vision of reconstruction. The doctrine of evolution had seriously shaken the foundations whereon so many of our contemporaries fondly believed the superstructure of life and hope must rest; and not a few gloomily asserted that if once this sweeping hypothesis became a familiar law, the fairy castles of poetry must fall as low as the stately temples of religion. I particularly remember the fears of one noble man, eminent in religion rather than theology, in general literature rather than technical scholarship. He was one of the rare living spirits that called compellingly to youth and bade us ever turn our visions toward the signals on the heights. At the close of a plea, remarkable, if not finally convincing, for the old religion, he turned to poetry, voicing most eloquently the dread I have suggested above. Never shall I forget the profound impression produced upon us by his sympathetic quoting of Matthew Arnold's plangent lines:

‘The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.’

In my heart was that gloomy sinking such as only youth in its hour of perturbed emotions can know. I felt as though I had followed the night wind ‘down the vast edges drear and naked shingles’ until I stood in a lonely world by a sea of doubt and pain with no shore of hope beyond.

And yet I felt that these comparatively new doctrines were even then adequately established, and knew that some of our poets were already embodying them as beautiful members in their fabric of verse. Furthermore, I felt that poetry must either be capable of emotionalizing, spiritualizing if you will, the facts that seemed grimmest, the scientifically approved doctrines that seemed most forbidding, or must die a death not altogether undeserved.

Then by sheer good luck, shortly after hearing that poignantly voiced foreboding, I was brought into renewed and more intimate contact with the Pre-Socratic philosophers and the metrical dissertation of that glowing disciple of Epicurus, who 'died chief poet by the Tiber-side.' From this contact was begotten the belief, soon strengthened by association with Goethe, that evolution offered not merely poetical material, but the possibility of a poetry more beautiful, more glorious, more nearly final than the world had ever seen. And my belief has grown steadily to this hour. Naturally, that supreme development can be achieved only when the doctrines have become a part of man's heart and imagination, as well as of his reason. That the hour has not yet struck is obvious, a fact that has been emphasized by our honored Nestor, Professor Charles Eliot Norton, in the semi-centennial number of *The Atlantic*. But the history of mankind has shown that one of the great functions of the Muse is to serve truth or doctrine by an emotionalizing process. From the most primitive chants of undeveloped tribes to the latest and highest hymn of aspiration, this educationally appealing power of poetry is most unmistakably manifest. Furthermore, the breadth of theme already compassed should lead us to expect that it may readily sweep on to universality. In the mean time, poetry will both familiarize itself with the new subject matter and make it more familiar to mankind, thus laying the foundations for the world-awaited masterpieces of the future. And it seems to me that in some of our recent poetry this is being done, and even at times finely done.

How most of the Victorian poets — Swinburne is hardly a Victorian — treated the hypothesis of evolution, we all remember. In the writings of Tennyson, for instance, which offer the most familiar example, there is abundant recognition of the doctrine. Frequently the Laureate shows his formal acceptance of the new order of things, albeit he will always reconcile the new and the old; occasionally he really grasps some phase of the theory and gives it back to us in melodious lines of graceful truth. On the whole, however, I have never been able to escape the conviction that as a poet he admitted the scientifically inevitable with more than half reluctance. 'Science grows and Beauty dwindles' probably had a wider meaning for him than it carries in its place in the later 'Locksley Hall.' But in the younger generation of English poets I seem to find that the doctrine and its corollaries have become a part of the heart and imagination, and occupy a perfectly natural place in their metrical outpourings. Nor is it strange that the new material was slowly assimilated. At first blush there could be nothing more unpromising for the votaries of the Muse than the theory that has revolutionized our conception of man and his place in the universe. My

patient reader will produce in himself the psychological attitude I am groping after, if he will accompany me through the following clear and striking tabulation from that fiercest of militant evolutionists, Professor Ernst Haeckel.

1. This perishable body, our earth, had gone through a long process of cooling before water in liquid form (the first condition of organic life) could settle thereon.

2. The ensuing biogenetic process, the slow development and transformation of countless organic forms, must have taken many millions of years — considerably over a hundred.

3. Among the different kinds of animals which arose in the later stages of the biogenetic process on earth the vertebrates have far outstripped all others in the competition in the evolutionary race.

4. Of the invertebrates the most important branch was formed by the mammalia.

5. Of the mammalia the most highly developed are the primates.

6. The youngest and most perfectly developed twig of the primates is man, who sprang from a series of manlike apes towards the end of the tertiary period.

Verily, the picture is not alluring, but we have been forced to accept it as truth of life. And from truth of life even Apollo himself must never flee. Nay, it is here or nowhere that his kingship must be finally established.

Inevitably the attitude of our poets toward the doctrine will show something of the divisions cleaving the rest of mankind. In the upward march from the primal slime through countless forms of pithecoïd and still lowlier ancestors, one band of thinkers will see either a "splendid accident," or at most the operation of an utterly incomprehensible power to which we are of absolutely no concern. In this same ascent another band of thinkers will trace a "beneficent Omnipotence" operating through all nature, from the tiniest ion, or electron, or nucleus of energy, or whatever may have been the first particle of matter, to the final crown of the universe, which is man.

Of the newer poets who accept the former solution, with all its connotations, we may find an unflinching example in Mr. William Watson. This hardy singer, in a prose argument to 'The Hope of the World,' accepts freely, but not gladly, the 'splendid accident' theory. And he goes on to assert that in view of our present knowledge 'the heroic course is rather to reject than to welcome the solace of an optimism, which apparently rests upon no securer foundation than that of instinctive hope alone.'

But in view of the ease with which an extremist of Mr. Watson's type may be arraigned for 'flippancy, youthful certainty, slap-dash pseudo-science,' and other terrible things, let us try to appreciate his real attitude

toward the great question of religious faith by glancing at one of his sonnets, which well deserves quotation for its intrinsic worth:

‘Dismiss not so, with light hard phrase and cold,
 Ev’n if it be but fond imagining,
 The hope whereto so passionately cling
 The dreaming generations from of old!
 Not thus, to luckless men, are tidings told
 Of mistress lost, or riches taken wing;
 And is eternity a slighter thing,
 To have or lose, than kisses or than gold?
 Nay, tenderly, if needs thou must, disprove
 My loftiest fancy, dash my grand desire
 To see this curtain lift, these clouds retire,
 And Truth, a boundless dayspring, blaze above
 And round me; and to ask of my dead sire
 His pardon for a word that wronged his love.

It was in this mood, then, this mingling of prayer and pain, that our author accepted the conclusion he has uttered for us in honest verse.

In ‘The Hope of the World’ he voices finally and unhesitatingly the view that Life and her consort Law are unaccompanied in their lofty realm by unconquerable Love. Heaven vouchsafes no sign that through all the frame of Nature her aim is a boundless ascent benign, that she led man in kindness up the steep.

‘In cave and bosky dene
 Of old there crept and ran
 The gibbering form obscene
 That was and was not man.
 The desert beasts went by
 In fairer covering clad;
 More speculative eye
 The couchant lion had,

And goodlier speech the birds, than we when we began.’

Then this incipient self of ours climbed at last in a mere fortuitous hour, the child of a thousand chances. That in our hearts Hope still lingers unsubdued, he will admit:

‘She tells me, whispering low:
 “Wherefore and whence thou wast,
 Thou shalt behold and know
 When the great bridge is crossed.

For not in mockery He
 Thy gift of wondering gave,
 Nor bade thine answer be
 The blank stare of the grave.

Thou shalt behold and know; and find again thy lost.”’

But he feels constrained to withstand the voice so passing sweet, the hand so profuse, and concludes with this stirring address:

‘ Carry thy largess hence,
 Light Giver! Let me learn
 To abjure the opulence
 I have done nought to earn;
 And on this world no more
 To cast ignoble slight,
 Counting it but the door
 Of other worlds more bright.

Here, where I fail or conquer, here is my concern:

‘ Here, where perhaps alone
 I conquer or I fail.
 Here, o’er the dark Deep blown,
 I ask no perfumed gale;
 I ask the unpampering breath
 That fits me to endure
 Chance, and victorious Death,
 Life, and my doom obscure,

Who know not whence I am sped, nor to what port I sail.’

We may glance also at ‘The Dream of Man,’ described as a fantasy. The Spirit of Man, the unwearied climber up the slopes of the ages, has conquered all powers soever, has transformed even the Lord of Death until he enters as a guest, serenely featured and waking no dread; has conquered the virgin planets and peopled the desert stars. To Man in this overweening pride God appears, and to humble his vaunting spirit, conducts him to a mighty peak of vision, saying:

“ Look eastward toward time’s sunrise.” And, age upon age untold,
 The Spirit of Man saw clearly the Past as a chart out-rolled,—
 Beheld his base beginnings in the depths of time, his strife
 With beasts and crawling horrors for leave to live, when life
 Meant only to slay and to procreate, to feed and to sleep, among
 Mere mouths, voracities boundless, blind lusts, desires without tongue,
 And ferocities vast, fulfilling their being’s malignant law,
 While nature was but one hunger, and one hate, all fangs and maw.

' With that, for a single moment, abashed at his own descent,
 In humbleness Man's Spirit at the feet of the Maker bent;
 But, swifter than light, he recovered the stature and pose of his pride,
 And, "Think not thus to shame me with my mean birth," he cried.
 "For this is my loftiest greatness, that I was born so low;
 Greater than Thou the ungrowing am I that for ever grow." '

Eventually Man overthrew Death; but 'his Soul rejoiced not, for the breath of his being was strife.' So he prayed for succor until God from his lonelier height restored Death and Hope; and with them renewed the delight of seeking and the rapture of striving, the only transcendent joy.

This time, then, we find not only the acceptance of the upward struggle but the recognition that it has been our highest pride for the past and must be our deepest joy in the future. Many may still feel that Love and unsubdued Hope are the final truth of the universe as well as the final cry of the human heart; but even the most conservative will scarcely deny that Mr. Watson has garnered sheaves of real poetry from this field that once appeared so unpromising. Surely the field must be naturally fertile or the sheaves could not be so rich and fair. Moreover, as the result of Mr. Watson's garnering, not a few of his fellowmen will be helped to realize emotionally the field they have already entered upon with the footsteps of reason.

Leaving the trend represented by Mr. Watson we may find in such a singer as Mr. Stephen Phillips the voice of those who prefer to see an 'omnipotent Benevolence' behind the veil. He accepts just as freely and fully the general line of evolution; but he finds therein the planning mind of the demiurge, the guiding hand of the father, who is kindly, even if far removed and dimly discerned. 'Midnight — the 31st of December, 1900,' is the title of a Janus-faced poem. The writer is primarily thinking forward; but his eye can descry no vision of the future dis severed from the history of the past; his vaticinations of what the Lord will do are based upon his conception of what the Lord has already done.

' In the years that have been, in the rocks I have shown ye a record
 And a ledger in layers of chalk;
 I have shown ye a book and a diary faithful in caverns,
 An account in the depths of the earth.
 When ye swayed to and fro as a jelly in ooze of the ocean,
 I foresaw, I determined, I planned.
 And I brooded on primal ooze as a mother broodeth,
 And slime as a cradle I watched.
 When ye hung on the branches of trees, when ye swung and ye chattered,
 I made ready, prepared and decreed

That in years that should be I would bring ye with patience through aeons,
 From slime through the forest to bliss;
 I would wean ye from climbings and fury to wings and to wisdom,
 From dark sea-stupor to life.

So the poet looks forward to man's higher triumphs under the guiding of the all-seeing and all-doing, who is likewise the all-kind. The waves of the ether shall be man's wheels; the tempest shall be sent on his errands. Matter and distance shall be no more. The illusion of death shall pass.

'In that day shall a man out of uttermost India whisper,
 And in England his friend shall hear;
 And a maid in an English meadow have sight of her lover
 Who wanders in far Cathay.

And the dead whom ye loved, ye shall walk with, and speak with the lost.'

But even in this death-conquering glory the spirit of mortals, now become immortal, is forbidden to be proud, in memory of their lowly origin and fear-some development.

'Yet remember the ancient things, the things that have been,
 And meekly inherit the earth!'

For the moment we are not concerned with the unpleasant realization that parts of the poem, with its great potentialities, are dangerously, almost desperately, prosaic. Mr. Phillips is still a true poet, from whom we have a right to expect much, unless his strength fails. We are not even concerned with the fact that his optimistic deism may be more comfortable than the unfainting scepticism of Mr. Watson. For us the significant feature is that Mr. Phillips has taken evolution to his heart, and unshrinkingly withal. He finds therein not merely a reasonable working hypothesis but an accepted manifestation of the ways of God towards man, which he will sing in gladness and hope.

Thus far I have kept before my eyes the general upward march of evolution; but there are many parts almost as attractive as the whole. One of these, for instance, would be the evolution of religion, a subject that immediately sets some of Swinburne's lines ringing in our ears. Others have formed felicitous themes for Mr. Kipling's pen, which is thoroughly up to date, whatever else it may or may not be.

But having deliberately fenced myself off from these, I may turn to such a topic as the outworking of ancestral influences in our personalities. The recapitulation of the race's experience in the individual,—a theory now

rejoicing in the inspiring description of 'onto-phylogenetic parallelism,'—is the larger view, of which heredity from less remote ancestors is a more familiar phase. Through your eyes and mine are looking not merely you and I, but our thousands of ancestors. From our earliest years we are ourselves by virtue of being our forefathers as well; in later life it is even possible to confuse the results of our individual experiences with the transmitted heritage. Not a few poets have seen the possibilities of the theme; but I am inclined to believe that among recent writers Mr. Phillips has given it the finest expression. 'Thoughts in a Meadow' in my respectful judgment, is one of the best things the author of 'Marpessa' has yet written; and he has already given us not a few poems for which our literature is really richer.

The thread runs like this: The never-absent sadness of mortals, felt even in the Maytime meadow, might have been avoided if the soul had wakened on a world just newly created, if it were the first that had breathed.

'But ah, through thine eyes unnumbered dead ones are peering

And by ghosts is the blowing meadow-land unforgotten;
Memories deepen the blue.'

The sunset is pathetic through tears not our own. From far-off hills we feel a divine beckoning. We tremble at the lightning from unknown eyes in a throng.

'And a child will sorrow at evening bells over meadows,
And grieve by the breaking sea.
O never alone can we gaze on the blue and the greenness;
Others are gazing and sigh;
And never alone can we listen to twilight music;
Others listen and weep,
And the woman that sings in the dimness to millions is singing;
Not to thee, O my soul, alone.'

But if we are the products of all that has gone before, so in equal truth is the 'flower in the crannied wall.' It is obviously true of the flower as seen by us; for we see it with the eyes of the world's history. We are the primal slime; we are the arboreal creatures with dimly glowing eyes; we are the club-wielding dwellers in the cave. But we are also the mind that told the stars in their arising; the mighty thinker who died of hemlock; yea, the Nazarene who died on the cross. The next step is to realize that this is equally true of the daisy or the columbine. The Temple of the Smallest Flower contains the secret of God just as truly as the Temple of Reason, or the Church of Christ, or the whole course of Man's development. The

most spiritualistic interpreter of the universe must accept the facts of the world-process, even if he sublimate them into a transcendental religion.

This lesson we may read most agreeably in the second part of 'The Flower of Old Japan,' a volume wherein Mr. Alfred Noyes has tried to lead us to the Kingdom by piping us back to youth. The God who guided mankind to his present heights is the God who made the rose; and our guiding and the rose's making belong to the same cosmic order.

'What does it take to make a rose,
Mother mine?
The God that died to make it knows
It takes the world's eternal wars,
It takes the moon and all the stars,
It takes the might of heaven and hell
And the everlasting love as well,
Little child.'

Many other phases of evolution are calling to my pen; and even on the topics already introduced I should like to summon the evidence of other writers. However, this meager treatment of three rather representative men may suffice to emphasize the feeling that evolution will present an ever more fertile field for poetry, and that poetry is bringing about the emotionalizing of the doctrine. Each day this scientific truth will become a more integral part of our emotional natures, and so will inevitably be transmuted into verse. I have never been troubled by any serious doubts about the persistence and power of poetry; nor have I to-day any patience with such a pessimistic query about the Muse as is voiced by Mr. Phillips.

'How should she face the ghastly, jarring Truth
That questions all, and tramples without Ruth?'

She will face it as she has ever faced it. The many mournful elegies on the great god Pan and the Muses nine are piped but for the passing hour. That rapturous Grecian world could have seen little hope for poetry in the material grandeur that was Rome. The dwellers in the imperial city on the Tiber must have been even more hopeless about the new religion founded by one Christus, whose followers were so obstinate and so inhuman. The cultured leaders of the splendid, triumphant Roman Catholic Church must have believed that from the somber, creeping Protestant religion there could never spring an epic at all comparable to Dante's. And so the tale is never told. The honored speaker with whom my paper began was simply repeating the old foreboding in its new environment. But Pan and the Muses abide; and who shall doubt that under the spreading branches of the tree of knowledge they will be more winsome than ever before, the pipe and the song be sweeter on their lips?

'PIPPA PASSES' AND 'PIPPA DANCES'

BY HELEN A. CLARKE

THE separate scenes in 'Pippa Passes' are remarkable for their consummate handling of intensely dramatic situations, the characters have a clear-cut reality, which has perhaps never been surpassed in any of the poet's later plays, yet the lovely personality of Pippa, who is, in a way, outside of the dramatic action, pervades and enwreathes as with a golden halo the whole play. When we think of the play we think of Pippa. She stands out in our mental picture like one of Fra Lippo Lippi's girl-like angels, for there is nothing of the ascetic about Pippa. She is a good, wholesome human being, loving her fellow creatures and as full of the joy of living as the water sprites that dance in the sunlight upon the ceiling. Every one is familiar with the hackneyed criticism that there is nothing of the childlike about Pippa, that she is a philosopher in pantalettes, that she talks through Browning's spectacles, or takes her walks abroad on her one holiday of the year in the poet's own special make of seven-leagued boots. I remember having been foolish enough when first I ran across such criticisms to take refuge in the poet's own profound disquisition upon the subjective poet in the often-quoted introduction to the volume of spurious letters by Shelley,—a passage deservedly dear to the hearts of freshmen in Browning study though not so perfectly descriptive of Browning's own genius as they are wont to imagine. You will remember that the poet here says of the subjective poet of modern classification that 'gifted like the objective poet, with the fuller perception of nature and man, he is impelled to embody the thing he perceives, not so much with reference to the many below as to One above him, the supreme intelligence, which apprehends all things in their absolute truth,—an ultimate view ever aspired to, if but partially attained, by the poet's own soul. Not what man sees, but what God sees,—the ideas of Plato, seeds of creation lying burningly on the divine hand,—it is toward these that he struggles. Not with the combination of humanity in action but with the primal elements of humanity, he has to do; and he digs where he stands,—preferring to seek them in his own soul as the nearest reflex of that absolute mind according to the intuitions of which he desires to perceive

*Read before the Boston Browning Society, December 15, 1908. New York Browning Society, December 30, 1908.

and speak. Such a poet does not deal habitually with the picturesque groupings and tempestuous tossings of the forest trees, but with their roots and fibers naked to the chalk and stone. He does not paint pictures and hang them on the walls, but rather carries them on the retina of his own eyes. We must look deep into his human eyes to see those pictures on them.'

It is true that a poet of Browning's order not only dwells within the heart and soul of his characters, but being their creator, he sees their larger, more universal relations, yet a Pippa once projected out of the poet's consciousness into the living world of the imagination can henceforth stand on her own little bare feet without need of any refutation of those early criticisms. She lives in our memories as a distinct personality as surely as Rosalind or Ophelia.

A very wise poet has said, I and mine do not convince by argument, but by our presence.

To any one who has heard a sympathetic interpretation of Pippa, either through reading or acting, she seems, indeed, a child in mood and thought and action, while her language often possesses that mixture of naiveté and wisdom so characteristic of a bright young mind.

Those whom we take to our hearts as we do Pippa hardly need to be graced by praise. Still, upon the most beautiful picture light may be thrown in such a way as to enhance its value, and I shall venture the experiment of throwing an X-ray upon Pippa from the rarefied atmosphere of a modern symbolic play, Gerhardt Hauptmann's 'And Pippa Dances.'

As the play has not yet become very familiar to American readers, a brief sketch of its content and its symbolism as I interpret it will not be out of place. Whether Hauptmann had Browning's Pippa in mind when he wrote 'And Pippa Dances,'* I do not know, but one cannot read the later play without feeling that Hauptmann called his sprite-like child Pippa because of the earlier poet's Pippa, or rather that he expressed by means of this name an ideal similar, yet in some respects the very opposite of Browning's.

Hauptmann's Pippa, is a little Italian child from Venice, the daughter of a skilled Italian glassblower. The scene opens with them in a tavern among a group of quarrelsome glassblowers and glass painters in the Silesian Mountains in midwinter.

Among the glassblowers the characters especially to be noted are the manager of the glass works; old Huhn, a former glassblower; and Michael Hellriegel, a traveling journeyman — these are the men most alive to the charm of the fairy-like child, who speaks little, and with the greatest simplicity when she does. After a short acquaintance with these characters

*See translation in POET LORE, Autumn Number, 1907.

their human semblance seems to dissolve and they suddenly appear to us as merely symbols of life, or rather of the still more subtle thing, psychic life. We do not find ourselves loving or hating these glassblowers, only wondering at their strange behavior and seeking if we may find some clue to their phantasmal proceedings. Perhaps the glassblowers may be art struggling for the attainment of beauty, or more likely they may be typical of humanity, tormented with the desire of possessing some good or beauty beyond its reach. The manager of the glassworks seems to stand for the commercial instincts of the age. He would buy his ideal. He offers Pippa's father increasing sums of money that she may dance for him.

Old Huhn, who had been a glassblower in the now defunct, old-fashioned glass works, may be the rougher, less-enlightened portion of humanity, longing also to possess its ideal. In this opening scene he finally entices Pippa away from the manager and persuades her to dance with him. In the poetical stage directions the dance is described to consist 'in something huge and awkward trying to catch something agile and beautiful as if a bear were to try and catch a butterfly which flitted around him like a bit of opalescence. Whenever the little one eludes him she laughs a bell-like laugh. She saves herself several times, whirling round and round and in so doing her red-gold hair becomes wrapped around her. The old manager hops about grotesquely and ridiculously, like a captive bird of prey.'

In the mean time Michael Hellriegel, the journeyman glassblower, has entered the tavern. He is evidently the poet. He, too, has his ideal, but he neither buys it nor forcibly carries it off as Huhn later carries off Pippa. He has no need to do so, for to him Pippa comes of her own free will, that is, the poet or artist comes nearer to a natural espousal of his ideal than he who would gain it either by money or by force. The manager does not cease in his efforts to gain possession of Pippa, while old Huhn, after her father is killed in a squabble over cards, carries her off to his own den, where he treats her kindly enough, but cannot lessen the child's horror or repugnance to himself. From him Michael rescues her.

When next Michael and Pippa appear upon the scene it is in the high mountain hut of Wann, a mysterious being who evidently symbolizes a fourth type of humanity — the learned man and the philosopher. Thither they have come for refuge from a wild snow storm. The manager and old Huhn also find their way into this lofty abode. After some talk with Wann whose flights into aerial regions of thought and more or less magic doings are decidedly distasteful to the manager's commercial instincts, the latter is finally cured of his desire for his ideal by having Pippa forget that she had ever seen him.

Not so old Huhn. He comes determined to realize his ideal. Wann, the philosopher, feels he has reached a plane where the chase after an ideal is no longer possible to him, though it gives him pain to realize this, and he watches carefully over Pippa for the sake of the poet Michael. Then comes the death struggle between the philosopher and untutored humanity on Pippa's account. Wann and old Huhn wrestle; Huhn is given his death blow. As he lies dying in horrible agony, Pippa and Michael come to him. Still this thought is ever of the little spark that flew up from the glass furnaces, this image of Pippa. He begs her more and more frantically to dance. The sympathies of both Pippa and Michael are aroused; Michael encourages Pippa to help the dying monster with her sympathy, but by the repeated entreaty of Huhn: 'Shall we dance again, little spirit?' She is frightened, 'Hold me, Michael,' she exclaims, 'don't let me go! He drags me to him, I am being dragged. If you let me go I must dance. I must dance or else I shall die! Let me go.' As she dances, old Huhn cries out, 'I am making a little glass, I am making it. I shall make it and knock it to pieces again! Come with me into the dark, little spark.' He crushes the drinking glass, which he still holds in his hands, and the pieces clatter to the floor. Pippa shivers and then grows suddenly rigid. She reels, Wann catches her in his arms. She is dead.

Michael to the end remains unconscious that Pippa is dead. The ideal is so much a matter of his own imagination that he is blind to the fact that it has no real existence, and goes forth on his journey thinking Pippa still by his side.

Thus this strange play ends! The man who would buy his ideal kills his own desire for it. The man who struggles willy-nilly to possess it, crushes it when he himself is crushed. The poet, who loves it, having once had his vision, is blind as to whether it is a reality or only a phantasm of his imagination and he is happy, after a fashion. The philosopher, whose learning and wisdom has shown him the fallacy of ideals in general, he alone holds the dead Pippa in his arms, and *knows* that, though she seems dead, she is really afar off on her own pilgrimage, she is still being pursued by the restless giant humanity, and still she dances, ever eluding her pursuer.

There are nearly three quarters of a century between the two plays. The first, written in 1841, may be taken as a type of the lofty spirit of idealism which a few great minds in the nineteenth century, notably Browning's, have maintained in the teeth of increasingly discouraging and decadent thought. The second, written in 1906, is a type of the hope, faint though it be, now dawning amid the shadows of doubt and cynicism which came to their artistic expression at the end of the century in the symbolistic school.

of writing. Maurice Maeterlinck is the high priest of the dawn of the new day, which he has nowhere more eloquently foretold than in his essay on the awakening of the soul. 'Many things,' he declares, 'announce its approach. A time when the soul will perceive without the mediation of the senses. It manifests itself above all in ways unknown, imperious, convincing, as if an order had been given and there was no longer any time to lose. It must prepare for a decisive struggle, and no one can foresee who will depend upon its victory. Never has it put into the field more diverse and irresistible forces. Art as well as life reflects this new and awakening power.'

This new plane of consciousness struggles to express itself in the symbolistic drama.

Hauptmann does not sing of the things of the spirit with the clarity and clearness of Maeterlinck. To him dawn is not yet upon us, but a hoped-for possibility only to be realized in some future phase of existence. Still like all plays of its kind 'And Pippa Dances' is packed with mysterious, half-elusive meanings, carrying one into realms beyond those of the ordinary intellect and emotions, and filling one with a vague sense of the larger, more universal meanings of life.

There is, also, the striving for an ideal, though it be a wavering and an elusive one, and not one to inspire with a joyous outlook upon the possibilities of humanity. In fact, the conclusions to be deduced from the play are much like those of the now fashionable philosophical sect — the pragmatists. Professor James's book on Pragmatism leaves one in much the same groping frame of mind as the play, though we must admire the intellectual cleverness of the one and the frequent artistic beauty of the other. Fortunately we have a Professor Royce to cheer us up with his inspiring philosophy of loyalty, and Pippa to sing out to us her unbounded faith.

How, then, is light to be thrown by this play of Hauptmann's on Browning's Pippa? It is to be remembered that the quality of an X-ray is to bring out in high relief the salient points of any object through which it passes. The keynote of the Hauptmann play is always the seeking to gain something. Hauptmann's Pippa is merely the embodiment of the outward vision of the egotistical inner wishes of the various types of humanity portrayed, varying in refinement according to the nature, but always and even at bottom selfish — a species of ideal with which we are most of us intimately acquainted in our own lives, and which being brought down from the X-ray region of symbolism is found to resemble the present individualist social philosophy, which, with a view to self-development, wears the individual out with a mad hunt for experience. After spending an hour with

this simulacrum of a Pippa, the human reality of Browning's Pippa comes out with a strength never felt before. It becomes manifest that she is a symbol too, like Hauptmann's Pippa, but instead of being merely the glass, reflecting the outward vision of mankind's own inner consciousness, she is the actual incarnation of pure goodness, and in relation to the other characters in the play is the power outside ourselves that makes for righteousness. She places herself imaginatively in sympathy with those she supposes Asolo's four happiest ones, and longs to touch or influence them in some way, and all unconscious to herself she becomes the mouthpiece of God to them. As she passes, singing, in succession, these four happiest ones, the good in the wicked, weak, or undeveloped natures blossoms out. They experience an instant change of heart, which reveals not only to Jules and Phene, but to all, 'an unsuspected isle in far-off seas.'

The whole conception is a Christian one — not only from the point of view of those who are saved by the sudden vision of goodness that Pippa awakens in them, but from Pippa's point of view, whose worth to God is not in the great amount she is able to accomplish, but in her loving spirit of helpfulness.

The importance in the scheme of things of small services as well as of great ones has been emphasized more than once by Browning. It is but a retelling of the lesson of the widow's mite — she hath done what she could.

Nor is it for nothing that the poet makes this ideal type of the spirit of Christianity a little Italian child. Social degeneration, art without true inspiration, a clergy often corrupt, a wavering patriotism were the hall-marks of Italian civilization in Pippa's day, when Austria still had its clutch on Italy's throat, and the tares of evil which flourished so openly in the great days of Italy's intellectual prime still continued to decay and fester in church and society. Yet a regeneration for Italy was at hand. The spirit of righteousness was singing abroad in the land and Italy could not but take heed.

An ideal which emphasizes the power of service rather than the power of attaining an end for one's self could never be a mere dancing vision. It has too firm a hold upon life, and its effect must be to strengthen character, and to put the power of attaining where it belongs — not an end but a means for the actual tangible creation of beauty and goodness.

To make clear the two dramatists' points of view, compare the effect of the sunrise in Hauptmann's play upon Michael and Pippa, and in Browning's play upon Pippa.

Michael and Pippa stand in old Huhn's den watching the sunrise. 'Already,' says Michael, 'a little bit of light is creeping in here! Look at

the tips of my fingers; there is even now a bit of sunlight upon them. Do you, too, hear birds singing, Pippa?' and Pippa asks, 'Don't you hear voices calling?' But it is only one voice — the terrible voice of old Huhn who is calling out a strange cry. They see him standing outside in the likeness of some frightful wood god,— his beard and his eyelashes full of icicles, his outspread hands extended upwards, he stands there and does not move, his closed eyes turned toward the East! The first rays of the morning shine on him. He gives forth another cry — this great blind type of untutored humanity — an inarticulate cry. Pippa asks what it means and the poet answers, 'I don't know, little Pippa, just exactly what. But it seems to me to mean "boy to all."'

It is the sunrise, Hauptmann explains, of the mighty winter sun.

'The year's at the spring,
The day's at the morn;
God's in his heaven,
All's right with the world,'

cries Browning's Pippa.

No uncertain seeming joy here!

Let us imagine the picture of the virtually *fin de siècle* Pippa of Hauptmann suddenly arrested in her dancing by the joyous beneficent song of Browning's Pippa, the two henceforth climbing and singing together.

HAUPTMANN'S VIEWPOINT IN 'UND PIPPA TANZT'

BY PAUL H. GRUMMANN

THE Edinburg Review for October, 1906, contains a review of Hauptmann's 'Und Pippa tanzt'* which lends itself admirably to the purposes of this paper since it supplies what otherwise might be considered a man of straw. The following extracts are fairly representative:

'Hauptmann has always hovered between realism and fantasy.'

'Und Pippa tanzt' is a fantastic drama which is very fantastic indeed.'

'It most closely resembles Hänsel und Gretel.'

'Hauptmann's energy and conviction seem to have abandoned him after the first act; but that is so good that the play remains an impressive one despite its shortcomings.'

'That which mars the play is the excellence of the first scene. Here we are quite seemingly in the real world; but if we have read the list of the dramatis personæ we have the further sense of being overshadowed by a symbolic world.'

'Rautendelein is created by the verse — Pippa is no more than a shadow and a name . . . she is the incarnation of the flame of the glass furnace.'

If we had needed any additional proof to demonstrate the flippancy of the criticism of the modern drama, this criticism might satisfy us fully. The reviewer has noted the realism of the first act, but is convinced that a certain symbolism is present, therefore the play is supposed to be marred by the excellent realism of the first act. If the play is symbolic then Pippa must symbolize something; let her symbolize the flame of the glass furnace even if there is no possible way of accounting for Wann's intense interest in such a flame.

Even if this assumption fails to explain the details of the play it may stand, and since the resulting interpretation is pure nonsense Hauptmann's drama must be '*very fantastic indeed*.'

*See the translation of this drama in POET LORE, Autumn Number, 1907.

Dr. Richard Meister in *Beilage zur Münchener Allgemeinen Zeitung* (Dec. 31, 1906) takes the task a little more seriously and attempts to find the significance of many details that clearly seem to point to a symbolic meaning. He concludes that Pippa symbolizes life; that Huhn represents the undeveloped and Wann the highly developed man, while Hellriegel and the director represent the transitional types between the two; the drama then is supposed to show us the attitude of these four types toward life.

Meister's interpretation marks a decided step in advance, but it fails to clear up the real difficulties. If Pippa symbolizes life, how can we account for the fact that the director goes to Wann for the purpose of ridding himself of his infatuation for her; how are we to explain the fact that he is as 'lebensfroh' as ever when he leaves Pippa in Wann's house. A still more serious objection to Meister's theory is that it does not account for the marked difference between the first act and the rest of the drama.

Before Hauptmann published 'Und Pippa tanzt' he gave the public a play which had been written for some time. It is not altogether unreasonable to assume that this was done with a purpose, for 'Elga'* contains Hauptmann's most interesting study of the double personality and employs the dream technique; both of which reappear in 'Und Pippa tanzt.'

Both dramas open with a very vivid first act in which certain circumstances and events are impressed with great clearness upon some one's consciousness — in the former drama upon the German knight, in the latter upon the director.

Even a casual reading of the first act reveals the fact that the director is the most important figure. We learn not only his interests in the practical world, but find that he is working out a *Weltanschauung* for himself. We learn that he has had a fascination for Pippa for some time. His attitude toward her is not shallow. He has tried to clarify his view of her, to account for her influence, and he makes excellent progress in the course of the first act. What is of prime importance, he confesses that he has dreamed that she is a salamander. He finds that Huhn also speaks of Pippa as a 'Geist' and is interested in his confession that he has seen Pippa arise from the fires of his glass furnace. It becomes clear to the director that Pippa represents the ideal to this crude man Huhn. When Huhn tries to dance with Pippa, the director puts his own significant interpretation upon the event; that Huhn, the undeveloped monster, is vainly trying to apprehend his ideal, which invariably evades him.

When Hellriegel enters, the problem grows still more interesting. The untempered dreamer, who is to be traced to Ibsen's 'Peer Gynt' rather

†See the translation of this drama in POET LORE, Spring Number, 1906.

than to German fairy lore, immediately appropriates the ideal, originally conceived by the director and Huhn.

A sharp distinction is drawn between the first and second acts. In the second act Huhn, Hellriegel, and Pippa are no longer actual individuals, but dream reflexes of these individuals in the consciousness of the director. The characteristics that the director has noticed in them in the first act are emphasized now to the point of caricature. Huhn has become the primitive man, the man brute wholly under the sway of all kinds of popular superstitions, and he betrays the barbarian's characteristic of personifying both animate and inanimate things.

Hellriegel is no longer Hellriegel, but the type of the irresponsible dreamer. The director invests him with the characteristics that he has associated with this type of man. The Hellriegel of the director's dream quite appropriately possesses 'einen verzauberten Zahnstocher, eine Flasche Elixier, einen Zwirnsknäuel, und ein Tischlein decke dich.'

The characteristics of Pippa which have been impressed upon the director most vividly in the tavern scene are greatly accentuated in the second act; her fear of Huhn, her devotion to Hellriegel, and her indifference to the director stand out more clearly.

From the beginning of the second act we see what the director might dream after his experiences in the tavern. Huhn carries Pippa to his hut. He looks upon her as a material possession which will deliver him from his fears and bring light and joy not only to him but to the whole world. Thus the primitive mind always exaggerates the importance of its ideal.

Hellriegel pursues Pippa rather aimlessly. She is a thing to be summoned by magic. The tones of the ocarina will call her into being. His banal lack of reverence and gratitude becomes clear when it is remembered that he imagines that he is helping the ideal instead of the reverse.

The third act presents the greatest problem of the play. Wann is introduced as 'eine mytische Persönlichkeit.' The word mytisch must, however, be taken in the modern sense as defined by Wundt in his 'Mythus und Religion.' Modern man has his individual mythology, for he has strongly differentiated experiences. Wann accordingly is 'eine mythische Persönlichkeit' in the consciousness of the director. We can readily see where the director gets his dream conceptions of Huhn, Hellriegel, and Pippa. The basis of his conception of Wann, however, is not presented in the tavern scene.

We may assume, however, that the director knows, or has known, some man, possibly a mountaineer, of unusual qualities. To this man he has frequently gone for advice at critical times and has obtained help. This man

has been idealized by the director and appears in his dream as his *Uebermensch*.

Characteristics are added just as Hannele associates many whole extraneous notions with Gottwald, and as Meister Heinrich in 'The Sunk Bell'* associates certain characteristics wholly in his mind with an old widow in the mountains. We can trace the sources of some of the director's idealizations. He has read 'Faust,' for we recognize unmistakable characteristics of Faust in Wann; he has read 'Nietsche,' for we see certain characteristics of the *Uebermensch* in Wann. 'Der Wann scheint neunzig und mehr Jahre alt zu sein, aber so, als wenn Alter potenzierte Kraft, Schönheit und Jugend wäre.' He has been interested in psychology† and has paid some attention to hypnotism, for Wann performs a number of hypnotic miracles.

Since he feels that the influence of the ideal is disquieting, the director in his dream goes to Wann in order to be cured of his infatuation for Pippa. Wann effects the cure by showing the director that Pippa has a decided preference for Hellriegel, a thought which is already in the director's mind in the first act. The dream merely presents it under a new aspect.

After the director has left Pippa in his dream, he still has an interest in the further actions of these dream characters. What will they do when I am gone?

At this point the double personality of the director is portrayed more clearly. There are two natures struggling within him. His lower self deserts Pippa from jealousy, his higher nature, which is reflected in Wann, faces the ideal more seriously but also abandons it in the end.

Wann immediately recognizes a new force in Pippa, a force that might vitalize his rather dead research; for he understands the principles of his mysterious ships, but only Pippa can make them sail.

Wann's Problem is to make Pippa a real, vital force that may assist these three individuals in working out their destiny. In order to accomplish this, the men who are courting the ideal must be made worthy of it. Wann immediately engages in physical combat with Huhn and wounds him seriously, a feature to be explained on the theory that brute force can rise to higher insights only through the suffering of pain. Huhn in his pain turns to Pippa for comfort and wishes to dance with her, in other words he uses his ideal as a crutch and a comfort instead of a real inspiration. Huhn

*First translated in POET LORE, Spring Number, 1898.

†Hauptmann's interest in certain phases of applied psychology is also evident in 'Der arme Heinrich,' whose body is clearly under the influence of his mind, and who, to a certain extent, practises self-hypnotism.

failure to rise to the test ends in his own death and the death of Pippa; that is, the ideal loses its validity at the moment when he who conceives it proves himself unworthy of it.

Wann attempts to train Hellriegel also to an attitude which may enable him to profit from the ideal which he has appropriated. He uses all his hypnotism and magic to inspire Hellriegel with reverence, for Hellriegel had betrayed a banal lack of reverence in the tavern scene. In this attempt Wann fails, and when he realizes that these two men who seemed to be influenced so strongly by Pippa, fail utterly to rise to the occasion, he realizes promptly that Pippa is really dead.

Wann had communed with God in behalf of Huhn. God had promised relief, but that relief came with the death of Huhn. With Huhn, according to God's own decree, his ideal passes away, for Wann, holding the dead Pippa in his arms, exclaims: 'Ecce deus fortior me, qui veniens dominabitur mihi.'

That we find the dream technique in the present play is proved by the fact that every detail which has seemed fantastic becomes significant. Collateral evidence may be cited in abundance.

(1) Act I, Page 20: '*Pippa*. Brr, Gerne sitz ich dicht am Glasofen. *Direktor*. Wie mir träumte, am liebsten netten drin. Siehst du, ich bin ein vernickter Kerl! Ein alter Esel von Hüttendirektor, der statt zu rechnen, träume hat.'

(2) The essential difference between Huhn, Hellriegel, and Pippa in Act I and the remainder of the play contrasted with the essential unity of the director throughout the play.

(3) The date of the publication of 'Elga.'

(4) Internal evidence of dream technique is abundant. Even the *Edinburg Review* stumbles over it without recognizing it. 'In the next act Hellriegel comes in search of her [Pippa] and without much difficulty—Hauptmann is perhaps ashamed to employ the machinery of the old fairy tales; but that is a mistake—Hellriegel takes the girl up the mountain, deep in snow, as far as Wann's house. The rest is rather stupid.' To be sure—the most extraordinary things are done in this drama without much difficulty, just as in our dreams, and the rest is stupid, just as dreams are stupid when we fail to analyze them,—fail to trace them to their sources.

The second act contains a still more striking example. When Hellriegel comes to Huhn's hut, Huhn rushes out with a club, but does not return to molest Hellriegel. Hellriegel here simply displaces Huhn in the director's consciousness and the result is an apparent incongruity in the dream.

(5) The fact that the director questions Wann and receives revelation from him would seem to indicate that this is not the director's dream. Upon closer examination it will be accepted as proof of the dream, for it is a common experience of the dreamer to state questions and receive information in just this manner. Stated psychologically, the subconscious simply rises to the point of consciousness at these moments. The untutored, of course, see evidence of the supernatural in such dreams, attribute mediumistic powers to the dreamer, or sees evidence of inspiration. Many examples of perplexing dreams of this type may be found in Ludwig Laistner's 'Der Rätsel der Sphinx.'

(6) Wann is the *Uebermensch* of the director, not the *Uebermensch* of Hauptmann, for Hauptmann's *Uebermensch* would have an ampler conception of the ideal. Wann is that for which the director is striving more or less definitely, a fact fully revealed in the words which the director addresses to Wann:

'Ach, wer doch auch so still vergnügt in Eis und Schnee resignieren könnte wie Sie — Meister Wann! Keine Nahrungs sorgen, kein Geschäft, keine Frau — über alle Torheiten weit hinaus die unser einen noch Kopfschmerzen machen und in gelehrte Studien so vertieft dasz man den Wald vor Bäumen nicht sieht: das ist wirklich ein idealer Zustand.'

(7) The Edinburg Review comes to my assistance once more. '“Und Pippa tanzt” owes its name to Browning, but it owes him nothing more.'

In 'Pippa Passes' Browning has shown the effect which the passing of Pippa has upon a number of characters. Hauptmann shows how Pippa has started a train of thoughts and emotions in the director; how these lead to a dream experience which reveals his lower and his higher self. It would seem, then, that Hauptmann's drama is indebted to 'Pippa Passes' for its central idea, which amounts to something more than the mere name.

It may be that 'Und Pippa tanzt' is too intricate to be good poetry. Critics, in the future, may class it with Otto Ludwig's 'Kleinpsychologie,' but it is possible, on the other hand, that it will be recognized as a type of poetry that enlists the interest of the reader from the beginning, gives him a feeling of mystery, and rewards him with deeper insights at every repeated reading. If the latter obtains, Hauptmann has caught the very spirit of the *Märchen* and has properly called his drama 'ein Glashütten märchen.'

THE MARRIAGE

BY DOUGLAS HYDE

MARTIN, a young man.

MARY, his newly married wife.

A BLIND FIDDLER.

NEIGHBORS.

SCENE.— *A cottage kitchen. A table poorly set out, with two cups, a jug of milk, and a cake of bread. MARTIN and MARY sitting down to it.*

Martin.— This is a poor wedding dinner I have for you, Mary; and a poor house I brought you to. I wish it was seven thousand times better for your sake.

Mary.— Only we have to part again, there wouldn't be in the world a pair happier than myself and yourself; but where's the good of fretting when there's no help for it?

Martin.— If I had but a couple of pounds, I could buy a little ass and earn a share of money bringing turf to the big town; or I could get a job at the fairs. But, my grief, we haven't it, or ten shillings.

Mary.— And if I could get but a few hens, and what would feed them, I could be selling the eggs or rearing chickens. But unless God would work a miracle for us, there's no chance of that itself. *(She wipes her eyes with her apron.)*

Martin.— Don't be crying, Mary. You belong to me now; am I not rich so long as you belong to me? Whatever place I will go to I will know you are thinking of me.

Mary.— That is a true word you say, Martin; I will never be poor so long as I know you to be thinking of me. No riches at all would be so good as that. There's a line my poor father used to be saying:

'Goods and store and gold always
Pass like the floods of rainy days.'

It was Raftery, the blind man, said that. I never saw him; but my father used to be talking of him.

Martin.— I don't care what he said. I wish we had goods and store. He said the exact contrary another time:

'Brogues in style and a house built high
Are kinder than naked fields and sky.'

Mary.— Poor Raftery! he'd give us all that if he had the chance. He was always a good friend to the poor. I heard them saying the other day he was lying in his sickness at some place near Killeenan, and near his death. The Lord have mercy on him!

Martin.— The Lord have mercy on him, indeed. Come now, Mary, eat the first bit in your own house. I'll take the eggs off the fire. (*He gets up and goes to the fire. There is a knock at the half door, and an old ragged patched fiddler puts in his head.*)

Fiddler.— God save all here!

Mary (standing up).— Aurah, the poor man, bring him in.

Martin.— Let there be sense on you, Mary; we have not anything at all to give him. I will tell him the way to the Brennans' house; there will be plenty to find there.

Mary.— Indeed and surely, I will not put him from this door. This is the first time I ever had a house of my own; and I will not send any one out at all from my own door this day.

Martin.— Do as you think well yourself. (*MARY goes to the door and opens it.*) Come in, honest man, and sit down, and a hundred welcomes before you. (*The old man comes in, feeling about him as if blind.*)

Mary.— O Martin, he is blind. May God preserve him!

Fiddler.— That is so, acushla; I am in my blindness; and it is a tired, vexed, blind man I am. I am going and ever going since morning, and I never found a bit to eat since I rose.

Mary.— You did not find a bit to eat since morning! Are you starving!

Fiddler.— Oh, indeed, there was food to be got if I would take it; but the bit that does not come from a willing heart, there would be no taste on it, and that is what I did not get since morning; but people putting a potato or a bit of bread out of the door to me, as if I was a dog, with the hope I would not stop, but would go away.

Mary.— Oh, sit down with us now, and eat with us. Bring him to the table, Martin. (*MARTIN gives his hand to the old man, and gives him a chair, and puts him sitting at the table with themselves. He makes two halves of the cake, and gives a half to the blind man, and one of the eggs. The old man eats eagerly.*)

Fiddler.— I leave my seven hundred thousand blessings on the people of this house. The blessing of God and Mary on them.

Mary.— That it may be well with you. O Martin, that is the first blessing I got in my own house. That blessing is better to me than gold.

Fiddler.— Aurah, is it not beautiful for people to have a house of their own, and to have eyes to look about with?

Martin.—May God preserve you, right man; it is likely it is a poor thing to be without sight.

Fiddler. You do not understand, nor any person that has his sight, what it is to be blind, and dark the way I am. Not to have before you and behind you but the night. Oh, darkness, darkness! No shape or form in anything; not to see the bird you hear singing in the tree over your head nor the flower you smell on the bush, or the child, and he laughing on his mother's breast. The morning and the evening, the day and night, only the same thing to you. Oh, it is a poor thing to be blind! (*MARTIN puts over the other half of the cake and the egg to MARY, and makes a sign to her to eat. She makes a sign to him to take a share of them. The blind man stretches his hand over the table to try for a crumb of bread, for he has eaten his own share; and he gets hold of the other half cake and takes it.*)

Mary.—Eat that, poor man, it is likely there is hunger on you. Here is another egg for you. (*She puts the other egg in his hand.*)

Fiddler.—The blessing of the Only Son and of the Holy Mother on the hand that gives it.

(*MARTIN puts up his two hands as if dissatisfied; and he is going to say something when MARY takes the words from his mouth, laughing at his gloomy face.*)

Fiddler.—*Maisead*, my blessing on the mouth that laughter came from and my blessing on the light heart that let it out of the mouth.

Martin.—A light heart, is it! There is not a light heart with Mary to-night, my grief!

Fiddler.—Mary is your wife?

Martin.—She is. I made her my wife three hours ago.

Fiddler.—Three hours ago?

Martin (bitterly).—That is so. We were married to-day; and it is at our wedding dinner you are sitting.

Fiddler.—Your wedding dinner! Do not be mocking me! There is no company here.

Mary.—Oh, he is not mocking you; he would not do a thing like that. There is no company here; for we have nothing in the house to give them.

Fiddler.—But you gave it to me! Is it the truth you are speaking? Am I the only person that was asked to your wedding?

Mary.—You are. But that is to the honor of God; and we would never have told you that, but Martin let slip the word from his mouth.

Fiddler.—Oh, and I eat your little feast on you, and without knowing it.

Mary.—It is not without a welcome you eat it.

Martin.—I am well pleased you came in; you were more in want of

it than ourselves. If we have a bare house now, we might have a full house yet; and a good dinner on the table to share with those in need of it. I'll be better off now; but all the little money I had I laid it out on the house and the little patch of land. I thought I was wise at the time but now we have the house, and we haven't what will keep us alive in it. I have the potatoes set in the garden; but I haven't so much as a potato to eat. We are left bare, and I am guilty of it.

Mary.— If there is any fault, it is on me it is; coming maybe to be a drag on Martin, where I have no fortune at all. The little money I gained in service, I lost it all on my poor father, when he took sick. And I went back into service; and the mistress I had was a cross woman; and when Martin saw the way she was treating me, he wouldn't let me stop with her any more but he made me his wife. And now I will have great courage, when I have to go out to service again.

Fiddler.— Will you have to be parted again?

Martin.— We will, indeed; I must go as a *spailpin fanac*, to reap and to dig the harvest in some other place. But Mary and myself have it settled we'll meet again at this house on a certain day, with the blessing of God. I'll have the key in my pocket; and we'll come in, with a better chance of stopping in it. You'll have your own cows yet, Mary; and your calves and your firkins of butter, with the help of God.

Mary.— I think I hear carts on the road. (*She gets up, and goes to the door.*)

Martin.— It's the people coming back from the fair. Shut the door, Mary; I wouldn't like them to see how bare the house is; and I'll put a smear of ashes on the window, the way they won't see we're here at all.

Fiddler (raising his head suddenly).— Do not do that; but open the door wide, and let the blessing of God come in on you. (*MARY opens the door again. He takes up his fiddle and begins to play on it. A little boy puts in his head at the door; and then another head is seen, and another with that again.*)

Fiddler.— Who is that at the door?

Mary.— Little boys that came to listen to you.

Fiddler.— Come in, boys. (*Three or four come inside.*) Boys, I am listening to the carts coming home from the fair. Let you go out and stop the people; tell them they must come in; there is a wedding-dance here this evening.

Boy.— The people are going home. They wouldn't stop for us.

Fiddler.— Tell them to come in; and there will be as fine a dance as ever they saw. But they must all give a present to the man and woman that are newly married.

Another Boy.— Why would they come in? They can have a dance of their own at any time. There is a piper in the big town.

Fiddler.— Say to them that *I myself* tell them to come in; and to bring every one a present to the newly married woman.

Boy.— And who are you yourself?

Fiddler.— Tell them it is Raftery, the poet, is here, and that is calling to them.

(The boys went out, tumbling over one another.)

Martin.— Are you Raftery, the great poet I heard talk of since I was born! *(taking his hand)*. Seven hundred thousand welcomes before you; and it is a great honor to us you to be here.

Mary.— Raftery, the poet! Now there is luck on us! The first man that brought us his blessing, and that eat food in my own house, he to be Raftery, the poet! And I hearing the other day you were sick and near your death. And I see no sign of sickness on you now.

Fiddler.— I am well, I am well now, the Lord be praised for it.

Martin.— I heard talk of you as often as there are fingers on my hands, and toes on my feet. But indeed I never thought to have the luck of seeing you.

Mary.— And it is you that made 'County Mayo,' and the 'Repentance,' and 'The Weaver' and the 'Shining Flower.' It is often I thought there should be no woman in the world so proud as Mary Hynes, with the way you praised her.

Fiddler.— Oh, my poor Mary Hynes, without luck! *(They hear the wheels of a cart outside the house, and an old farmer comes in, a frieze coat on him.)*

Old Farmer.— God save you, Martin; and is this your wife? God be with you, woman of the house. And, O Raftery, seven hundred thousand welcomes before you to this country. I would sooner see you than King George. When they told me you were here, I said to myself I would not go past without seeing you, if I didn't get home till morning.

Fiddler.— But didn't you get my message?

Old Farmer.— What message is that?

Fiddler.— Didn't they tell you to bring a present to the new-married woman and her husband. What have you got for them?

Old Farmer.— Wait till I see; I have something in the cart. *(He goes out.)*

Martin.— O Raftery, you see now what a great name you have here. *(Old farmer comes in again with a bag of meal on his shoulders. He throws it on the floor.)*

THE MARRIAGE

Old Farmer.— Four bags of meal I was bringing from the mill; and there is one of them for the woman of the house.

Mary.— A thousand thanks to God and you. (*MARTIN carries the bag to other side of table.*)

Fiddler.— Now don't forget the fiddler. (*He takes a plate and holds it out.*)

Old Farmer.— I'll not break my word, Raftery, the first time you came to this country. There is two shillings for you in the plate. (*He throws the money into it.*)

Fiddler.— Love for God is this man's guide,
Giving his meal with an open hand.
Better a cabin stocked inside
Than a table bare in a farmhouse grand.

Old Farmer.— *Maisead*, long life to you, Raftery.

Fiddler.— Are you there, boy?

Boy.— I am.

Fiddler.— I hear more wheels coming. Go out, and tell the people Raftery will let no person come in here without a present for the woman of the house.

Boy.— I am going. (*He goes out.*)

Old Farmer.— They say there was not the like of you for a poet in Connacht these hundred years back.

(*A middle-aged woman comes in, a pound of tea and a parcel of sugar in her hand.*)

Woman.— God save all here! I heard Raftery the poet was in it; and I brought this little present to the woman of the house. (*Puts them into MARY's hands.*) I would sooner see Raftery than be out there in the cart.

Fiddler.— Don't forget the fiddler, O right woman.

Woman.— And are you Raftery?

Fiddler.— Yes! 'Tis Raftery, poet of song!
Gentle my trade, and love my pay,—
Darkness before me the roads along,
Peace in my heart keeps grief away.

Woman.— The good man.

Fiddler.— The handy dame her own praise sings
When on my plate her shilling rings.

(*A young man comes in with a side of bacon in his arms, and stands waiting.*)

Woman.—Indeed, I would not begrudge it to you if it was a piece of gold I had (*puts shilling in plate*). The 'Repentance' you made is at the end of my fingers. Here's another customer for you now. (*The young man comes forward, and gives the bacon to MARTIN, who puts it with the meal.*)

Mary.—I thank you kindly. Oh, it's like the miracle worked for Saint Colman, sending him his dinner in the bare hills.

Fiddler.—May that young man with yellow hair
Find yellow money everywhere!

Fair Young Man.—I heard the world and his wife were stopping at the door to give welcome to Raftery, and I thought I would not be behindhand. And here is something for the fiddler (*puts money in the plate*). I would sooner see that fiddler than any other fiddler in the world.

Fiddler.—May that young man with yellow hair
Turn lucky trades in every fair.

Fair Young Man (to MARTIN).—How does he know I have yellow hair and he blind? How does he know that?

Martin.—Hush, my head is going round with the wonder is on me.

Mary.—No wonder at all in that. Maybe it is dreaming we all are.

(*A gray-haired man and two girls come in.*)

Gray-Haired Man (laying down a sack). The blessing of God here! I heard Raftery was here in the wedding-house, and that he would let no one in without a present. There was nothing in the cart with us but a sack of potatoes, and there it is for you, ma'am.

Mary.—Oh, it's too good you all are to me. Whether it's asleep or awake I am, I thank you kindly.

Fiddler.—Don't forget the fiddler.

Gray-Haired Man.—Are you Raftery?

Fiddler.—Raftery surely! Show good-will,
Let your coin my platter fill.

Gray-Haired Man.—You're welcome; you're welcome! That is Raftery, anyhow! (*Puts money in the plate.*)

Fiddler.—Come hither, girls, give what you can
To the poor old traveling man.

Gray-Haired Man.—Aurah Susan, aurah Oona, are you looking at who is before you, the greatest poet in Ireland? That is Raftery himself. It is often you heard talk of the girl that got a husband with the praises he gave her. If he gives you the same, maybe you'll get husbands with it.

First Girl.— I often heard talk of Raftery.

The Other Girl.— There was always a great name on Raftery. (*They put some money in the plate shyly.*)

Fiddler.— Come then, girls, help how you can
The poor and blind old traveling man.

First Girl (to MARY).— Here's a couple of dozen of eggs, and welcome

The Other Girl.— O woman of the house! I have nothing with me here; but I have a good clucking hen at home, and I'll bring her to you to-morrow; our house is close by.

Mary.— Indeed, that's good news to me; such nice neighbors to be a hand. (*Several men and women come into the house together, every one of them carrying something.*)

Several (together).— Welcome, Raftery!

Fiddler.— If ye have hearts are worth a mouse,
Welcome the bride into her house.

(*They laugh and greet MARY, and put down gifts — a roll of butter rolls of woolen thread, and many other things.*)

Old Farmer.— Ha, ha! That's right. They are coming in now. Now Raftery; isn't it generous and open-handed and liberal this country is! Isn't it better than the County Mayo?

Fiddler.— I'd say all Galway was rich land,
If I'd your shillings in my hand.

(*Holds out his plate to them.*)

Old Farmer (laughing).— Now, neighbors, down with it! My conscience! Raftery knows how to get hold of the money.

A Man of Them.— *Maisead*, he doesn't own much riches; and there is pride on us all to see him in this country. (*Puts money in the plate, and all the others do the same. A lean old man comes in.*)

Martin (to Mary).— That is John, the Miser, or Seagan na Stucaire as they call him. That is the man that is hardest in this country. He never gave a penny to any person since he was born.

Miser.— God save all here! Oh, is that Raftery? Ho, ho! God save you, Raftery, and a hundred thousand welcomes before you to this country. There is pride on us all to see you. There is gladness on the whole country, you to be here in our midst. If you will believe me, neighbors, I saw with my own eyes the bush Raftery put his curse on; and as sure as I'm living, it was withered away. There is nothing of it but a couple of old twigs now.

Fiddler.—I've heard a voice like his before,
And liked some little voice the more;
I'd sooner have, for my own part,
A smaller voice, a bigger heart.

Miser.—Ho! ho! Raftery, making poems as usual. Well, there is great joy on us indeed, to see you in our midst.

Fiddler.—What is the present you have brought to the new-married woman?

Miser.—What is the present I brought? Oh, *maisead!* the times are too bad on a poor man. I brought a few fleeces of wool I had to the market to-day, and I couldn't sell it; I had to bring it home again. And calves I had there, I couldn't get any buyer for at all. There is misfortune on these times.

Fiddler.—Every person that came in brought his own present with him. There is the new-married woman, and let you put down a good present.

Miser.—Oh, *maisead*, much good may it do her! (*He takes out of his pocket a small parcel of snuff; takes a piece of paper from the floor, and pours into it, slowly and carefully, a little of the snuff, and puts it on the table.*)

Fiddler.—Look at the gifts of every kind
Were given with a willing mind;
After all this, it's not enough
From the man of cows — a pinch of snuff!

Old Farmer.—*Maisead*, long life to you, Raftery; that your tongue may never lose its edge. That is a man of cows certainly; I myself am a man of sheep.

Fiddler.—A bag of meal from the man of sheep.

Fair Young Man.—And I am a man of pigs.

Fiddler.—A side of meat from the man of pigs.

Martin.—Don't forget the woman of hens.

Fiddler.—A pound of tea from the woman of hens.
After all this, it's not enough
From the man of cows — a pinch of snuff!

All.—After all this, it's not enough
From the man of cows — a pinch of snuff!

Old Farmer.—The devil the like of such fun have we had this year!

Miser.—Oh, indeed, I was only keeping a little grain for myself; but it's likely they want may it all. (*He takes the paper out, and lays it on the table.*)

THE MARRIAGE

Fiddler.— A bag of meal from the man of sheep.

All.— After all this, it's not enough
From the man of cows — his ounce of snuff.

(One of the girls hands the snuff round; they laugh and sneeze, taking pinches of it.)

Old Farmer.— My soul to the devil, Seagan, do the thing decently. Give out one of those fleeces you have in the cart with you.

Miser.— I never saw the like of you for fools since I was born. Is it mad you are?

All.— From the man of cows, a half ounce of snuff!

Miser.— Oh, *maisead*, if there must be a present put down, take the fleece, and my share of misfortune on you! *(Three or four of the boys run out.)*

Old Farmer.— Aurah, Seagan, what is your opinion of Raftery now? He has destroyed worse than the bush! *(The boys come back, a fleece with them.)*

Boy.— Here is the fleece, and it's very heavy it is. *(They put it down, and there falls a little bag out of it that bursts and scatters the money here and there on the floor.)*

Miser.— Ub-ub-bu! That is my share of money scattered on me that I got for my calves. *(He stoops down to gather it together. All the people burst out laughing again.)*

Old Farmer.— *Maisead*, Seagan, where did you get the money? You told us you didn't sell your share of calves.

Fiddler.— He that got the bag of gold
For calves he said he never sold,
He must put good money down,
Giving his gold without a frown,
Or I'll surely break that man
With a bone-destroying rann;
I'll rhyme his soul out by the book,
He'll get that pale blue-watery look.

Miser.— Oh, Raftery, don't do that. I tasted enough of your ranns just now, and I don't want another taste of them. There's threepence for you. *(He put three pennies in the plate.)*

Fiddler.— I'll put a fine new name upon
This farmer strong: 'tis Thrippenny John!

He'll be called, without a doubt,
Thrippenny John from this time out.
Put your sovereign on my plate,
Or that and worse will be your fate.

Miser.— Oh, in the name of God, Raftery, stop your mouth and let me go! Here is the sovereign for you; and indeed it's not with my blessing I give it.

Fiddler (plays on the fiddle. They all stand up and dance but SEAGAN NA STUCAIRE, who shakes his fist in Fiddler's face and goes out. When they have danced for a minute or two, FIDDLER stops fiddling and stands up.)— I was near forgetting: I am the only person here gave nothing to the woman of the house. (*Hands the plate of money to MARY.*) Take that and my seven hundred blessings along with it, and that you may be as well as I wish you to the end of life and time. Count the money now, and see what the neighbors did for you.

Mary.— That is too much indeed.

Martin.— You have done too much for us already.

Fiddler.— Count it, count it; while I go over and try can I hear what sort of blessings Seagan na Stucaire is leaving after him.

(*Neighbors all crowd round counting the money. FIDDLER goes to the door, looks back with a sigh, and goes quietly out.*)

Old Farmer.— Well, you have enough to set you up altogether, Martin. You'll be buying us all up within the next six months.

Martin.— Indeed I don't think I'll be going digging potatoes for other men this year, but to be working for myself at home.

(*The sound of horses' steps are heard. A young man comes into the house.*)

Young Man.— What is going on here at all? All the cars in the country gathered at the door, and Seagan na Stucaire going swearing down the road.

Old Farmer.— Oh, this is the great wedding was made by Raftery. Where is Raftery? Where is he gone?

Martin (going to the door).— He's not here. I don't see him on the road. (*Turns to young farmer.*) Did you meet a blind fiddler going out the door — the poet Raftery?

Young Man.— The poet Raftery? I did not; but I stood by his grave at Killeenan three days ago.

Mary.— His grave? Oh, Martin, it was a dead man was in it.

Martin.— Whoever it was, it was a man sent by God was in it.

THE MYTHS OF MARY

BY HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

IF it is true in a major sense that men cannot get along without poetry, it is also true in a minor fashion that every race must have a mythology. Even outwardly prosaic Americanism has been striving blindly after something of the kind. Olympus and the loves of the gods no longer being serviceable, Longfellow tried vainly to work upon the myths of the Indians, and Irving, with more success, employed the quaint tales of the Hudson valley. To-day the imagined life of bears and dogs and the wild generally supplies a kind of mythology which sets the mind free and the fancy at work. But, in a broader sense, for many years a movement has been discernible to develop and build upon a mythology of far greater beauty and infinitely more significance.

Only the other day they were playing in Paris a little piece called 'Le Tombleur de Notre Dame,' and Mr. Markham, not long ago in the *Century*, retold in English verse the same story for English readers. Again, Maeterlinck's charming 'Sœur Beatrice' has been before the public long enough to rank high among his dramatic works in the general estimation. Both plays and the English poem are founded upon stories of Our Lady, and the *contes dévots*, from which they are taken, are but two among numberless stories as charming and as susceptible of artistic development. Nor are the two authors remarkable for their expeditions into the chronicles of the monks and the records of the church. More and more, as the beautiful fabric of Greek mythology becomes unreal, or, worse, hackneyed, poets have been and will be inclined to turn to the Christian as well as to the pagan past to dig up the buried talent, and put to usury the Christian mythology.

While Theocritus and Ovid turned Greek folklore into literature, Maeterlinck has employed for the same purpose a Christian legend. But all three poets at the time when crude story stuff seemed to be losing its truth with the passing of the superstition which gave it birth, have transformed it into something artistic and durable. That this should have been possible for the Greek tales, and that from the myth of the sun god so beautiful a story as Phaeton's should have been made, is not surprising, but we are not accustomed to suppose the Christian story so excellent a medium for the artist to work in. The Christian legend has seemed to be as dead as Keats's beadsman, his thousand aves told. Only one notable argument, that

of Froude's, has appeared in recent years in its behalf. Its heroes and heroines, who filled so much of the medieval imagination that our Christian names to this day are in large part borrowed from theirs, are now almost forgotten except as the subjects of famous paintings inspired by their lives. Every one knows more of Diana or of Venus than of those virgin knights of the early church, Cecilia, Juliana, and Margaret. And yet it is too true that Venus and Diana are beginning to lose their significance. Their mythology is waning, and to supplement it a new one is being profitably sought among those stories which sprang from the imagination of the medieval church.

If only the imagination remains unsophisticated a myth may be made as well in one age of the world as in another. The Christian literature of the early centuries, within the Bible and without it, is crowded with the work of man's fancy. Naturally all that is unhistorical is not myth. Yet whole books of miracles have come down to us, particularly from the ingenuous West, every story of which is as fresh and as artless as the folk tales of the savages. The sixth century 'Dialogues' of Gregory the Great is such a work. His stories of saints who kill caterpillars by prayer, or of wicked men blasted by fire in their very graves, assuredly do not seem to be fit materials for modern art. Yet the folk tale of the man serpent, from whence arose the exquisite Greek story of *Cupid and Psyche* was no less homely, nor was it filled with that devotion which raises the least of these Christian marvels above contempt.

But the artist who wishes to employ a Christian myth need not be content with such harsh stories of the West, or with the more romantic saints' fictions of the East. Obscure holy men of homely lives often aroused the medieval fancy to a pitch where was conceived the myth worthy to enter into art. Splendid narratives of adventure, like Brendan's, or great allegories such as the romance of Christopher, were created with only a saint as hero. But a stronger motive than the love of a too human martyr or a too abstract God aroused the devotion of the early Christian. It flowered in myths which were more beautiful than the saints' lives because their heroine, the Virgin Mary, was more beautiful in the eyes of men than St. Thomas, St. Nicholas, or St. John. Thus it is natural that in the miracles of Mary we should find the most perfect examples of the Christian myths, and to them we can most readily turn for illustrations of a mythology readily adaptable to the purposes of the subjective, slightly symbolic poetry of the twentieth century.

The worship of Mary had begun at least as early as the fourth or fifth centuries of our era, as we know from the recently discovered mosaics in

the churches east of the Jordan, and from as early as the sixth century at least one story of her miraculous powers has come down to us. But the Christian fancy was not really busy with her deeds until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when she herself had gained almost a predominance in the worship of the church. From about that time date the great manuscript collections of her miracles. The earliest are in Latin, but many of the later ones are in French, the work of Gautier de Coinci, and other devoted monks. The other vernaculars were not lacking in examples of the cult, and through much of the Christian literature of the period one finds, in collections, or scattered singly, these little stories, always short, always simple, and usually inspired with the most chivalrous and ardent devotion.

A common spirit inspires them, and it is for this reason perhaps that they are usually found in great collections where, just as with Zeus or Aphrodite, a vast number of little legends have clustered about the name of Mary. 'Les Miracles de Nostre Dame,' the French books are called 'Miracles of Our Lady,' the English. An industrious German, Mussafia, has noted the occurrence of all manuscripts which perseverance could unearth. The *Wiener Academie der Wissenschaft*, 1887-88, contains his labors by which the quaint and beautiful miracles of Our Lady are packed away for all the world like a collection of butterflies in a spool box. Whether a dull scribe recorded the miracle in abbreviated Latin, or a loving English monk described it in rough but touching verse, is equal to the German, but as Baedeker to these myths his work is invaluable.

A common spirit inspires all such stories. It is not merely the spirit of the *conte dèvot* — devotion plus naïveté and a dash of the marvelous. All these ingredients are present, but in the Mary story one finds something more. It is the spirit of personal loyalty, of chivalry, of a feudal devotion to the 'Mayden, Modur, and comely Qween,' 'the Qween Corteis and hende, 'that swete may.' Like Aphrodite she was beautiful, 'the ffeireste lady that evere was bore.' A prompt interceder with the Trinity for all poor sinners, she was divine, yet shared the weakness of humanity. According to the monks she demanded especially love of her worshippers and a particular devotion, for which she would overlook some little defect in morals — after all a sin in some one else's province. The lecherous priest of whom it was said, 'Yit he served ure Ladi day bi day ful specialy' was saved at the end. The wanton brother who greeted the image of the virgin each night as he passed 'out of cloystre on his wilde-hede,' gained Mary for an advocate, and, though drowned, was restored to life and given a chance to reform. Indeed, for the medievals who wrote or heard these stories she was a divinity whose worship was not for earth too hard, and thus, more

readily even than the infant Christ, she lent herself to myth. And she appealed to precisely those qualities of loyalty and ideality where woman was concerned which chivalry had disproportionately developed. Such a spirit breathes through all these stories of Our Lady, however homely in plot, and gives them beauty of rare and particular quality.

This beauty is not of language, for usually they were written by men better servants of God than of the muses. Nor does it lie in well-balanced narrative nor in true description, for artistry, even when these are present, was seldom in the thought of the writer. It is rather to be found in the naive sincerity of the teller, in his strong devotion, his intense and chivalrous love, and in his conception of the beautiful deity he praises. The resulting stories are like Gothic architecture, which can neither be imitated nor restored without the loss of something which gives a characteristic quality to its meanest example. Yet this analogy should go no further, for a development and transformation of the old story is possible and desirable in these miracles of Mary. Among all the remains of Christian myth they are best fitted for some such artistic reworking as was given to the legends of early Greece.

The medieval stories of Mary are to be ranked with some lost intermediary between the savage idea of a man serpent and the Greek tale of Cupid and Psyche. They are neither savage nor consciously artistic, and they may be justly compared with the pictures of the Italian primitives, in which strong and sincere feeling is more evident than art. It is the fashion at present to call the work of these primitives great. The critic who reserves the high places of art for the frescoes of Giotto should call these stories great literature, for the same qualities of sincerity, of intense devotion, and of imperfection are to be found in them. As literature, whether great or small, they deserve a special essay all their own, but the attempt may be launched with a few English stories to serve as examples of the gold the imagination of our forefathers has laid up for us. And this is the more easily justified because the rarity, which time and destruction have brought, has made them precious in our tongue.

But one English collection in any considerable part survives. Our purists, finding them at the same time too mythical and too intimately involving the sacred personages of the church, purged religious literature either by destroying the manuscripts which contained them, or by tearing away the leaves upon which the miracles were inscribed. The surviving collection has not come through unscathed, for vandals have torn out of the great Vernon manuscript which contained it all but nine of the forty-two stories which the title page records. The manuscript itself dates from about 1380, but the miracles of Mary, according to its editor, Horstmann, come to

us from perhaps more than a century earlier, and were probably written in the South East Midland dialect of that period.

One looks with regret at the forty-two titles of the original work, recognizing many delightful stories, familiar in other tongues; for example, 'how out of a monkes mouth, aftur his deeth, grew a lillie, and in every leef was wryten wvt large lettres of gold: ave maria.' But neither in French nor in Latin are to be found stories more charming than those which survive. Chaucer has made use of the plot of the second for his Prioress' tale of the little clergeoun murdered by the Jews, but it is not probable that he drew upon this version of the widespread story. Yet, written only about a century later, his story is no longer naive. With all the devotion of the earlier writer he has consciously emphasized the pathetic beauty of the tale and transferred it from myth to art. But no artist has remoulded the third miracle, a narrative whose value lies in its qualities of sympathy, devotion, and naive belief. It tells of a holy hermit and a harlot who tempted him and was repulsed. She thinks him sanctimonious.

' In scorn heo (she) cleped him papelard,
And seide: "Thou fol, thou dotel ffrere,
What is al that pryve roun (talk)
That thou whistrest up and down."
Ffor he folewede nout hire dilyt
The wommon hedde of him dispyt.'

The hermit retorts by offering a prayer for her wellbeing. The damsel is somewhat touched.

' Leove (dear) ffrere, of me tac non hede,
ffor to thi preyere have I non nede.'

But the holy man is more sensitive to the perils of sin. For his slight misdeeds he asks the prayers of the harlot, and here the teller of the tale delivers his master stroke. Says the hermit:

' I prey the, damesele, that thou knele;
With herte and good devocioun
Of my synnes get me pardoun;
Mekely knelyng on thi kne
Threo Pater Noster preye to God for me,
And to his swete Modur Mari
Threo Aves therto for my merci.'

The damsel must assent. Meekly kneeling on her knee before an image of Mary and her child, with heart and good devotion she prays for the hermit. The babe seems to look upon her wrathfully, and, turning its back, says to the virgin mother, 'Modur, seistu (seest thou) myn enemy preyeth for my frend.' But Mary intercedes, beseeching her son that for his friend's sake the sinner may be forgiven. Repenting of her grievous sin the harlot in forty days has joined the heavenly host and lives 'in murthe and play.'

This is the very type of Mary story, quaint, sincere, a little shocking to modern tastes, yet with the spirit of the middle ages, naive but not mystical, breathing through it. How one could dramatize the incident! And although a modern interpretation would destroy its value as a flower of thirteenth century fancy, one recognizes the presence of the myth, the story emanating from the simple heart and destined to become the mould into which will be poured greater imagination and greater thought.

Another story, as quaintly conceived, is the fourth, which tells of a Jewish boy who followed his Christian playmates into church. There,

'Him thouhte he nas nevere er so glad
As he was of that semeli siht,
Such on bi-fore never seye he had:
Bothe laumpe and tapers, brenninde briht,
And Auters curiousliche de-peynt,
Images ful deinteousliche i-diht,
And guld (gold) of moni a good corseynt.'

There is a relish in the description. One feels that the writer was worthy to see Gothic art in its prime. But the Jew boy, 'hoselet' with the rest, was espied at the church door by his father, who cries, 'thou getest thi mede,' and clapped him into a glowing oven. His mother appeals to the bailiffs for aid, 'Sires, ye hav this Citée to kepe.' They open the oven and find the boy unharmed and mirthful. He says,

'Bothe Brondes and Gledes, trustily,
That weren bi-nethen undur my fote,
As feire floures, feithfully,
As special spices, methoughte hem swote.'

His saviours had been,

'The Blisful Qwen, that Maiden Milde,
That sitteth in chirche in hih Chayer
With that comely kyng, hire childe.'

The charm of this tale, in part, lies in exquisite phrases, 'As special spices, me thoughte hem swote,' but most of all in the quiet joy of the monkish writer in the sovereign influence of his lady.

The fifth and eighth stories are less charming, but the bizarre in their plots seem to have made them popular, for they are often met with in the great collections. The fifth tells how Our Lady 'drouh out — a newe leg' for an admirer who had been forced to part with his; the eighth how she fed with her own breasts a monk whose throat was swollen with the quinsy. Grotesque, almost coarse, as these stories sound as *plots*, the effect is different when one reads them in the quaint English of the Vernon manuscript. Jove was not mean in the guise of a swan, nor is the maiden queen in these narratives. The adventure of the quinsied monk, which most troubles our sense of the appropriate, has all the glory of a divine visitation for the English writer. For the honor came only to a holy man, whose heart was so bent upon the love of Our Lady that

'Of other thinges rouht he nouht
So swete on hire was his thouht.'

He lived in those early days when men first began to collect the songs and prayers to the Virgin:

'That tyme riht as men doth floures
Men gederede furst Matines and Ures
That men usen now of ure ladi,
And seiden hem devoutly.'

Such stories as these are but part of a great coinage. In plot they are not original and in form they are far from perfect. But though students of the medieval must feel their beauty, and lovers of the modern admit it, it is not as literature, but as the stuff from which literature can be made, that they demand consideration. As works of the imagination they deserve the attention denied them as history and denied them as fictitious chronicles of what might have happened in their age. The veil of superstition has dropped from before them and revealed the myth.

The Greek, with his keen perception of sensuous beauty, saw foam tossed from the clear pool, and, in his fancy, made Hylas struggling to be free while white-wristed nymphs wreathed him with their arms. The medieval monk, filled full of spiritual devotion, dreamed of his lady, coming, mild and glorious, to help him for the prayers he had said. The one story

is obviously beautiful, the other, perhaps, only earnest and touching, but both are certainly myths.

All myths, indeed, though born alike of the fancy of primitive man, soon begin to show the developing spirit of race. The Greek was seeking for the harmony of nature, and thus he saw white arms among the water sedges and the young Apollo harping in the glades, where the barbarian could imagine only formless spirits of the waste. The monks who made the Christian myths were not children of the wood, but men, whose tradition was literary tradition, and whose work was with the pen. Instead of nature they built upon a noble doctrine and an exalted belief. But, though learned as learning went, they were children of their age. They were naive and the mythology handed down to them provided gods of limitless power, who were always present to help or to harm. Naturally they became myth makers, and, insensitive to the beauty of the external world, they filled their work with a pure and ardent devotion, in which a lofty moral sense was instinct. This devotion, never lacking even in the most prosaic of legends, transforms the simple miracles into symbols of the hearts of those that wrote them. It is the prime quality of the Christian myth and most distinguishes it from the beautiful Grecian stories. If ideals of loyalty, of purity, of righteousness and self-sacrifice exist to-day, and seek expression, the naive symbols of these Christian stories may prove such fortunate frameworks for the attempt as were the narrative of Endymion or of Orpheus for imaginative thought of a very different order. Critic and reader (wanting inspiration) may well hesitate to say how our poets should use the tales. But it is not required that like Maeterlinck in 'Soeur Beatrice,' we should fill the old bottles with new wine. One can do no more than suggest that as the Greek myth stood to the Greek poet so these simpler stories may stand to the writers of a generation which has kept the old ideals and the old emotions, while losing the medieval beliefs.

It is their high morality and religious devotion which has delayed the literary development of the Christian legends. Circumstances put a bridle upon the writer of the Renaissance that the painter did not feel. The poet worked with the medium in which his sacred stories were expressed. He was bound down to the narrative of the Bible and to the scarcely less authoritative legends. There were ways of escape, but not every race could produce a Milton. Usually the Christian stories were impracticable, for even when most fantastic they were so closely related to the ethical and moral ideas of Christianity, and their personages were so sacred, that it was blasphemous to treat them as works of the imagination. Since the Bible had not been illustrated the painters could make whatever they pleased from their

subjects, but the writers who desired equivalent freedom went to Ovid, to Homer, and to the medieval romance, and kept away from the dominions of the church.

But from all such fanciful myths as the Mary stories of the Vernon manuscript no prejudice withholds us now. If they have lost in historical truth they have gained in imaginative truth. They are symbols of the faith of our civilization, and only the childhood of a race can invent symbols which so accurately represent the heart of the people, for only in childhood is it done unconsciously. Ovid invented no myths. The old tales come from the heart of the race and are always better worth retelling than the new. So it is with these Mary stories. They are beautiful as the flowers 'men gather ere they decay,' and for their own sake they deserve resurrection from the grave of the manuscript or the vault of the scholarly publication. But it is the poet, surcharged with his own *Zeitgeist*, and seeking a fable, who should need them most of all.

THE HEARTH FIRE

BY CHARLOTTE PORTER

ELOQUENT heads of haughty trees,
Talking with clouds, wreathed with the breeze,
Long cherished on the breast of fruitful earth,
Felled for the pyre be ye,— shorn for the hearth!
Lie ye low, fallen prone,
Bound on man's altar-stone!

The windy locks, wide-tossed, be furled,—
Let curling flames in eddies whirled,
Mock with their narrow, vortexed, parching glare
The fresh free gestures of uncabined air!

Renounced be life of kind and seed!
Let green fire bleed for human need,
The green fire fertile in the sun-god's look
Be red fire barren in the chimney-nook!

Bleeding sap, tongue of flame,
Sing thy joy, sing thine aim!—
The peons chant of living wood,—
Exalted, gods in lowlihood,—
Sibilant, sacrificial embers dying,
Jubilant spirit-splendor prophesying!

And you, ye flaunting heads of high desires
Let red flame sway!

Burn ye to feed in me life's purer fires,
And purge the clay
Down by the root close-clinging!
Let branching pride sky-springing

To greater gods of secret spirit-power
In sacrifice be shorn!

Nor shrink nor mourn

The nurture of life's lesser dower —

Earth's breast, the beacon-sky. O no! destroy, destroy
Sky-glory and Earth-deariness so keen pangs deploy
Life's hidden force and free the flame-winged blossom — Joy!

HELOISE TO ABELARD

BY MARIAN C. STANLEY

(*From the Convent of the Paraclete*)

‘*Ego autem (Deus scit) ad Volcania loca te properantem praecedere minime dubitarem.*’—*Epistulae Heloissæ.*)

Dost dream years teach my soul to disavow
The lordship of a love that laughs at Fate?
Were I to-day a queen in golden state,
With jewelled diadem upon my brow,
Straight would I fling my scepter down if thou
Didst call, and follow thee through Hell’s dark gate!
Yea, though at last with victor’s palm, elate
On heights of Heaven I were sitting now
The saint’s high place and aureole I’d discard
Might I but find again the narrow seat
There in my chamber by the window barred,
And as I dreamed upon love’s secret sweet
Might hear a child, light tripping down the street
Sing, *Heloise the love of Abelard!*

II

‘*Non enim mecum animus meus sed tecum erat. Sed et nunc maximè si tecum non est, nesquam est?*’—(*Epistulae Heloissæ.*)

THOU bad’st me give my soul to God, nor knew
(Yet O my Sweet, how couldst thou fail to know?)
I could not do thy will, since long ago
My soul grew one with thine. Yea, it slipped through
Our kissing lips, when Love’s first rapture drew
Mine inmost being theeward. Even so
The sun all splendid in the morning’s glow
With ardent kisses drinks the silver dew.

Thine, thine, despite the silence of the years;
Thine, though with bitter penitential tears
I seek my soul for Heaven, ’tis still with thee.
If it is not, I tell thee as I live,
I know not where it is. Ah! couldst thou give,
Couldst thou but give my soul again to me!

III

' *Nec reverentia Dei, nec amori nostri me java duitius mærore confectam,*
epistula consolari tentaveris.'—(*Epistulæ Heloissæ.*)

ACROSS the years, out of the desolate dark
 I cry. Wilt thou for aye my love disown?
 Thrust from thy breast it threads the void alone
 Like to the dove of old that from the ark
 Forth faring found no green thing, nor could mark
 A single peak, o'er weltering waves far flown;
 So my love, crossing empty seas unknown
 Sees naught below but dead dreams drifting stark.

Oh my beloved, when the night is deep
 And thou dost lie unvisited of sleep,
 Canst thou not hear the wing's faint fluttering?
 Stirs not some memory of the dear dead past?
 Then speak, oh speak! so wearied love may bring
 The bud of promise to my heart at last.

IV

' *Vide quæam infelicem ducam vitam!*'—(*Epistulæ Heloissæ.*)

BELOVED, when at the loom of Time we two
 Life's single web did weave, therein we blent
 All glowing hues that joy and wonder lent.
 How swift the shuttle of the bright days flew,
 How blithe the golden thread of love we drew,
 Until it gleamed with splendor orient
 Bordered with royal purple, pearl besprent
 With ruby flames (love's heart beats), flashing through!

Then harsh Fate sudden smote with iron shears;
 Since when alone, while Life doth grayly wane,
 With heavy hands and slow I draw the skein
 Dark threaded, at the wide loom of the years,
 Weaving the web and broidering it with tears
 Whose warp is passion and whose woof is pain.

THE LAMP OF HEAVEN

Translated from the French of Leconte de Lisle

BY C. L. CRITTENTON

OUT of the golden chain of quick'ning stars
The Lamp of Heaven hangs from the sombrous blue
Over the great sea, the mountains and shore.
In the soft peace of the pure, warm air
Lulled to the sigh of the pensive waves,
The Lamp of Heaven hangs from the sombrous blue
Out of the golden chain of quick'ning stars.

It bathes and fills the horizon without end
With the enchantment of its limpid calm;
It silvers the shades at the bottom of the hollows
And pearls the nestlings perched in the palms,
Who sleep, lightly, in a divine slumber,
From the enchantment of its limpid calm
It bathes and fills the horizon without end.

In the soft mystery, O Moon, where thou art,
Art thou the sun of the happy dead,
The White Paradise where they dream their dreams?
O dumb world, pouring out on them
Splendid dreams made from the best untruths,
Art thou the sun of the happy dead,
In the soft mystery, O Moon, where thou art?

Always, forever, eternally,
Night! Silence! Forgotten of bitter hours!
You only absorb the desire which lies,
Hate, love, thought, pangs, and fancy?
You only appease the old torment,
Night! Silence! Forgotten of bitter hours!
Always, forever, eternally?

Out of the golden chain of quick'ning stars,
O Lamp of heaven, hanging from the sombrous blue,
Droop, fall into the sea without shore!

Make a black gulf of the pure warm air,
A last sigh of the pensive waves,
O Lamp of Heaven, hanging from the sombrous blue
Out of the golden chain of quick'ning stars!

THE SEACOAST OF BOHEMIA

BY ALICE WILLIAMS BROTHERTON

Our ship hath touched upon the deserts of Bohemia.

— THE WINTER TALE.

What, ho, my Captain! Whither bound?
And are you sure the course you steer?
These shores upon no map are found,
No marks upon the chart appear!
No glass we need, no chart we scan,
Nor sail by any sounding's law;
One Shakespeare found us long ago
The seacoast of Bohemia.

Now nay. The schoolmen sneering smile,
And say no seacoast hath that land!
Science and Reason never found
The way to reach its sea-washed strand.
But Wordsworth saw it in the light
That never was on land or sea,
The light of poesy which floods
The peaks and plains of Phantasie.

THE SEACOAST OF BOHEMIA

Dante once found there the dark gate
 Which to the Inferno leads, and pale
 And awestruck through the three Worlds paced,
 And scarce returned to tell the tale.
 Poet and mystic and such souls
 As keep the child-heart in the breast,
 Maker of story and of myth,
 By such alone that strand is pressed.

Here Fancy's fairest children hold
 Immortal youth; here come and go
 Crusoe; the Red Cross Knight, Undine,
 Don Quixote, Esmond, Ivanhoe.
 Here dwell the gods from Greece exiled,
 Here Castaly's waves with sunbeams sport;
 And here, in dewless summer nights,
 Still Queen Titania holds her court.

And ye must take, who'd sail with me,
 The childlike trust, the simple heart,
 The wealth of feeling strong and deep;
 No lucre of the world's cold mart.
 Know ye the password? 'Wilt believe?'
 The challenge, and the countersign
 'I will believe!' The warden smiles;
 'All treasures of the land are thine!'

O Captain, let me sail with you!
 That land of yore I knew full well,
 But in the market's mirk and din
 Had half forgot the old-time spell.
 I do believe! Stern Fact begone!
 Aside I fling cold Reason's law,
 And sail Imagination's sea.
 For seacoasts of Bohemia.